HOUSE of the SUN

3

Taamo

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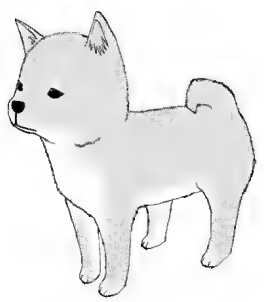
3

by Taamo



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CHARACTER

Mao Motomiya
Second-year high-school student. Without a place to call home, Mao moves into Hiro's house. Mao is secretly writing an online autobiography.

Roommates

Hiro Nakamura
Businessman with housewife tendencies. Mao's childhood friend. Hiro has been protecting his family's home ever since his parents died in his third year of high school, hoping to once again live with his sister and brother.

Friends

Coworkers

Classmates

Chi-chan
Mao's friend, who is in a different class. Could she have a crush on Oda-kun?

Oda-kun
Mao's classmate since first year. He confessed his love to Mao and got rejected, but isn't giving up.

Sugimoto-san
She is Hiro's coworker and has a secret crush on him. She is a fan of Mao's novel. Her pen-name is "Radical."

STORY

After her father gets remarried, Mao feels like she no longer has a home and ends up moving in with Hiro, her childhood friend.

Mao falls in love with Hiro, who is kind and takes care of her. She confesses her feelings to him, but then immediately takes it back, saying it was all a joke.

Around the same time, Mao discovers that Radical-san, a fan of her online novel, is Hiro's coworker and has a crush on him, too. What's more, Oda-kun from school confesses his love to Mao!

Mao finds herself moved by these two people who can be straightforward about their feelings...

Hello, my name is Taamo.
This is the third volume. I hope you enjoy it.

The terrible Tohoku earthquake occurred while I was putting together this book. Thank you for purchasing *House of the Sun!* I pray from the bottom of my heart that the victims and the areas affected by this disaster will recover as soon as possible.

-Taamo

story 9
A Father's Words

...the first time he'd come by since Mao came to live with me.
It was...
Hello. It's been a while.
...
Hello. I brought the payment for next month.
Please come in.
Mao is waiting.
I'm sorry. You've been a great help, Hiro.
I am truly grateful.
How is Mao doing?

You're not coming in?
You can see how she's doing for yourself.
Even if I saw her, I don't know what I'd say to her.
If she isn't causing you any trouble, then I'm fine.
And it doesn't seem like you want to see me, either.
Why don't I just deposit the money into your account from now on?
...
Well, then, I'll be leaving.

Next month...
...and the month after...
...please just make sure to stop by.
Please don't make a deposit.
...
And please say hi to her in person.

Good night.
Mao.
What's with him?
How can he call himself a father?

WHINE
クゥーん…
WHINE
クゥーん…
ひゃん…
YAP
YAP
ひゃんっ
ひゃんっ
WOOF
WOOF
ひゃん
It's 5:00 AM.
YAP
キャいん
キャいん
YAP
Good morning, Croquette.
You're gonna wake up the neighbors.
YAP
キュん
YAP
キュん
THUD
ばた
…

BEND
ガクッ
...
There, there.
Okay, okay.
ZZZ
ひゃんっ
WOOF
YAP
きゃーん
ZZZ
ZZZ
Croquette?
Hiro? What are you doing?
ZZZ
...
ひゃーん
WOOF
WOOF
ひゃーん

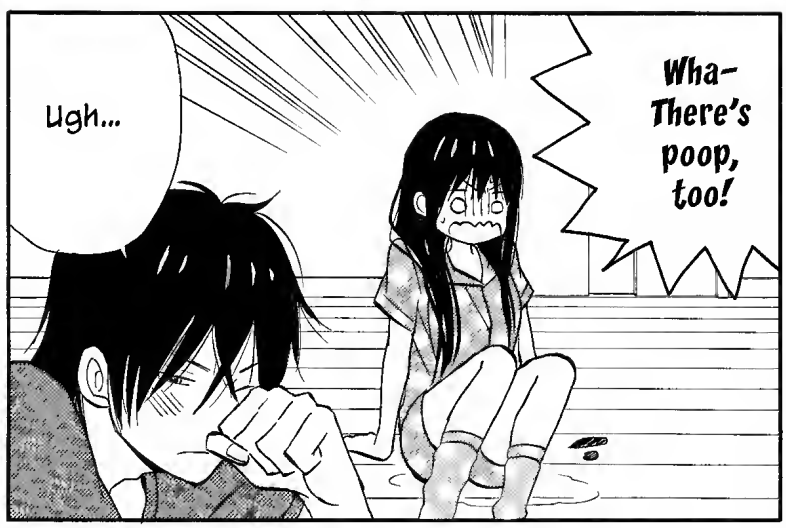
SLIP
つるんっ
Whoa!

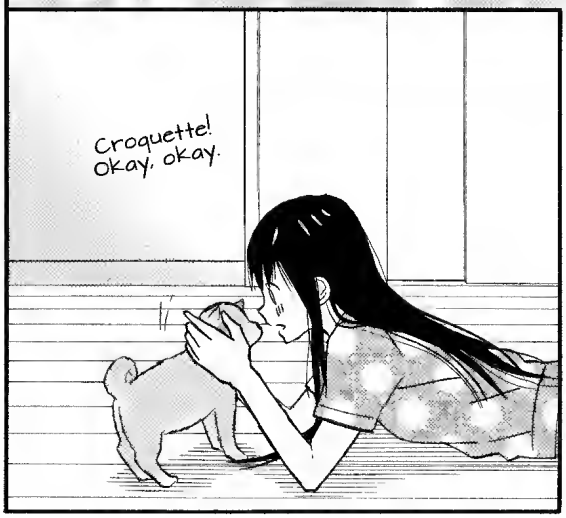
Hiro, wake up.

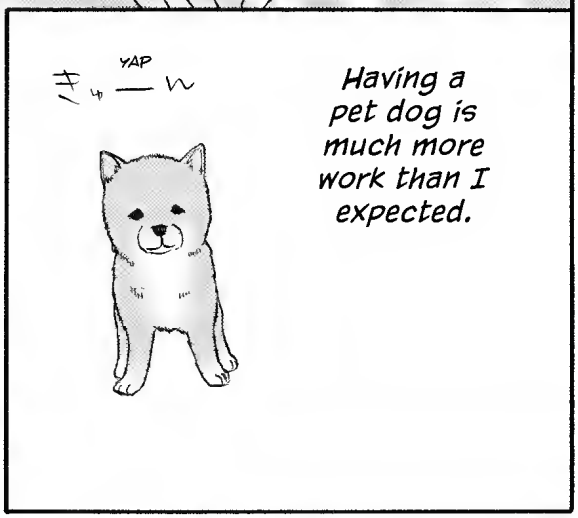
どしん
THUD

P-Pee...?

...


Ugh...
Wha- There's poop, too!





I brought the money to cover next month.

...the day Mao's father came to pay her room and board...
That day...
It's his own daughter. I don't get it.
What's with his attitude?
I should've given him a piece of my mind.
...I was so angry I could hardly speak with him.
Maybe there's a reason Mao's father is like that.

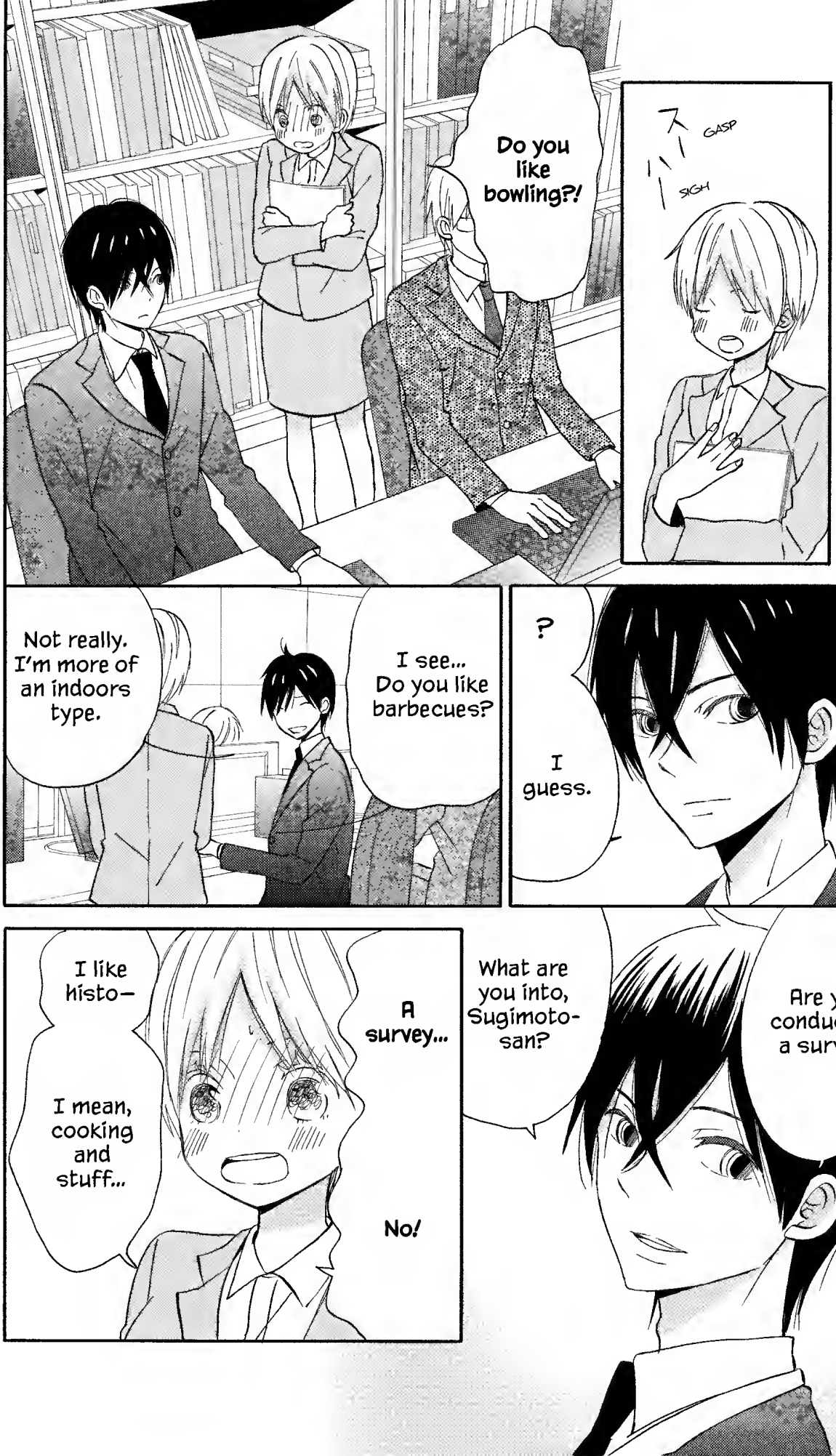
If Mao doesn't have the courage to confront him...
...then it's my duty to do so.
...
Hiro.
Should I soften the dry food with milk?
Oh, sorry.
Yes, milk is fine.
...
Ah!
I'm awake now!
?

Hey, what's wrong?
...
Uh... I want to take today off.
Don't you need to get ready for school?
You'll be late
What? Did something happen at school?
Did you get a love confession?
Of course not!
Oh, to be young.
I was always working, so I never got to enjoy my youth.
KSH
KSH
カ"
ガ"
シ
シ
No way! I was right!
しど"ろ"
BLUSH
FLUSH
もど"ろ"
School is f-fine...

Why do I feel so irritable?
GRR GRR
Hiro, that's too much.
OVER-FLOWING
こんもり
Who is the boy, and where did he come from?
Oh! Now that you mention it...
...there's a movie that I want to see.
By yourself?
Why are you upset?
I...I'll go by myself.
Who are you going with?
You like going to the movies alone?
How weird
Not really, but it's a period drama.

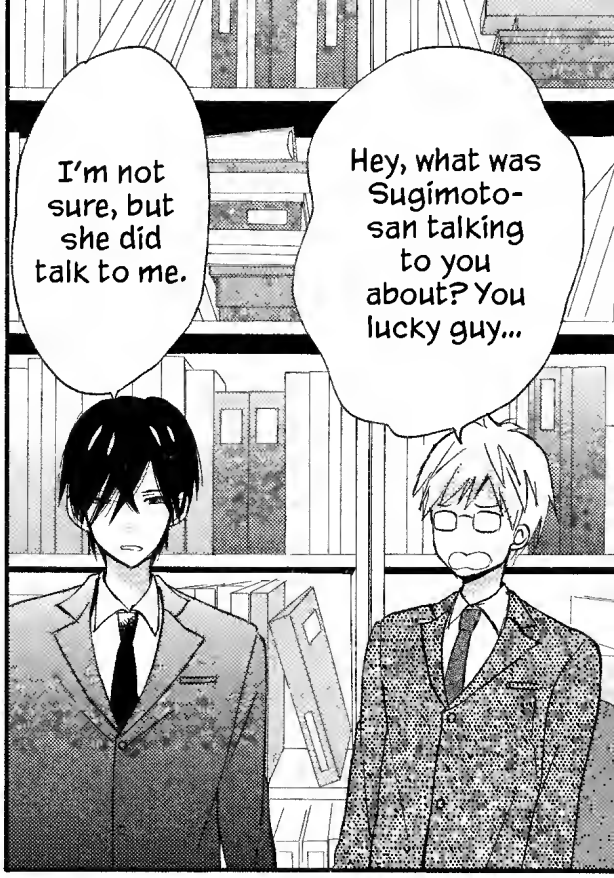
In that case, want to go with me?
Why are you making that face?
Let's go together!
Let's go.

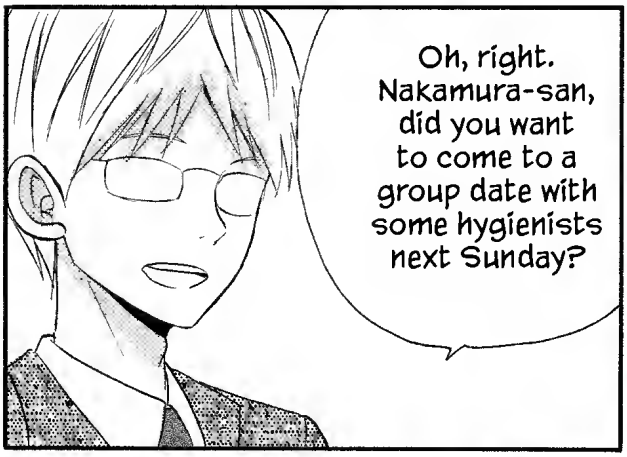
Okay.
YAWN
くあ
CLICK CLICK
カチカチ
Excuse me... Um, Nakamura-san...

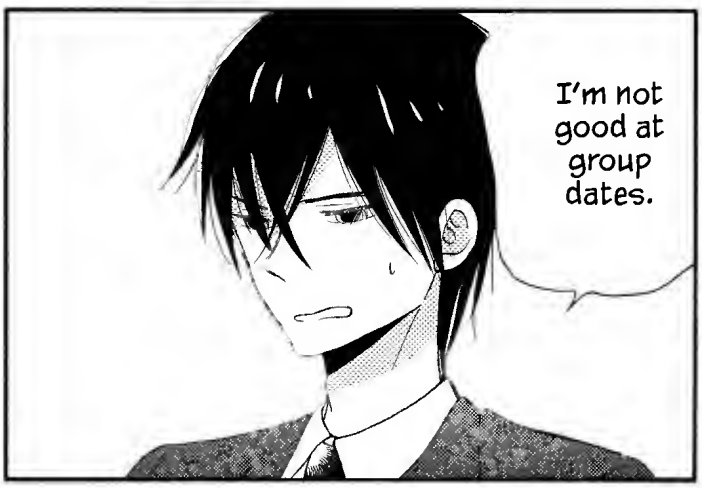

Do you like bowling?!
GASP
SIGH
I see... Do you like barbecues?
Not really. I'm more of an indoors type.
?
I guess.
Are you conducting a survey?
What are you into, Sugimoto-san?
A survey...
No!
I like histo—
I mean, cooking and stuff...

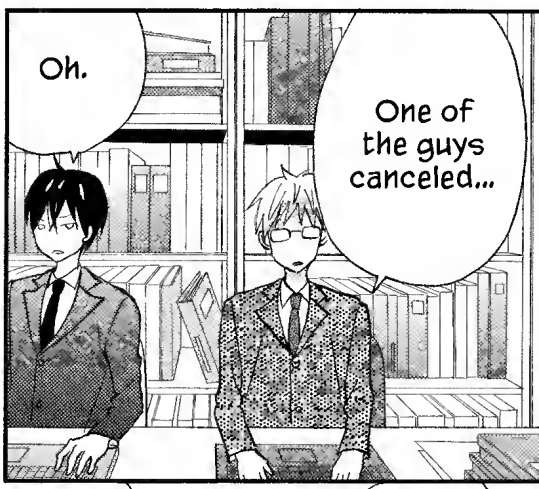
Yeah. I cook for myself as much as possible.
Wow, really?
Cooking?
Me, too.
My sister lives with me now.
That's amazing! You live alone, right?
It's not a survey, but...
Um...
N-never mind...
Excuse me!

I want to talk to her, too!
Go ahead. It felt nice.


Hey, what was Sugimoto-san talking to you about? You lucky guy...
I'm not sure, but she did talk to me.


Oh, right. Nakamura-san, did you want to come to a group date with some hygienists next Sunday?


I'm not good at group dates.


One of the guys canceled...
Oh.

What? You're going to the movies with your sister?! That sounds like a date!

There's gonna be cute girls.
It's okay. I'm going to go see a movie with my sister that day.
And we've got a dog, so I have to get back home fast.

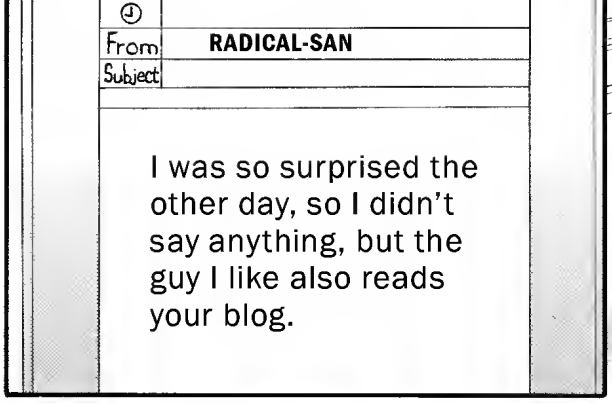
INCOMING MAIL

From RADICAL-SAN

Subject

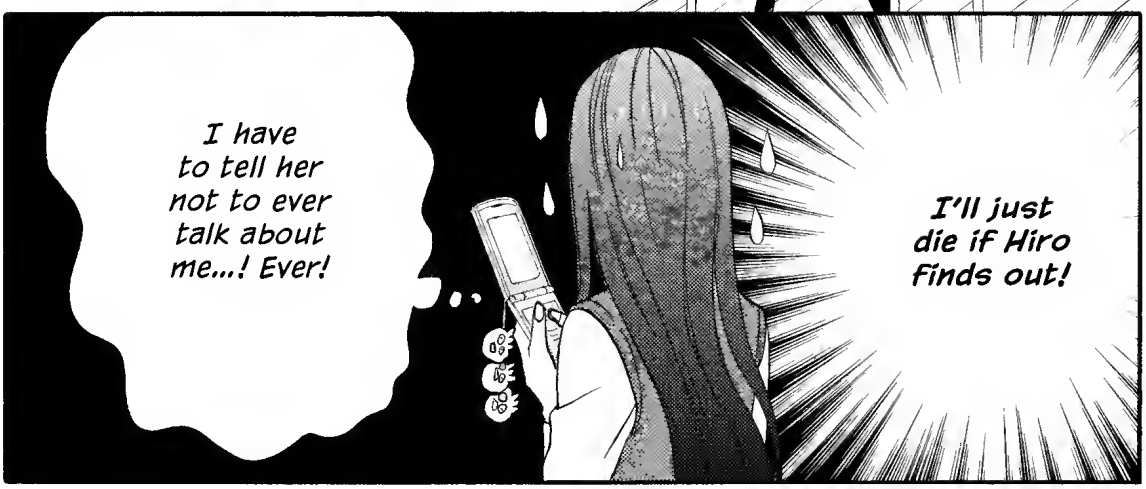
I'm sorry, Kuukai-san.

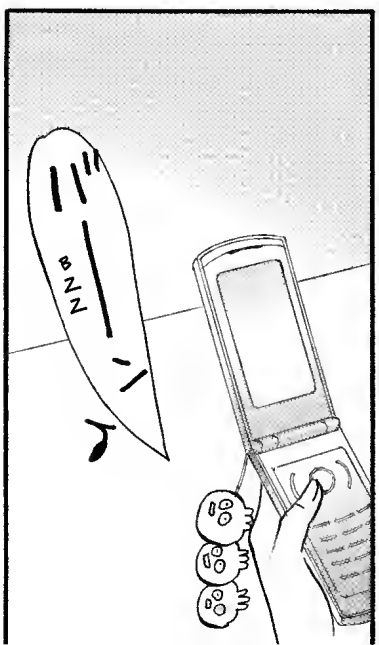
Is it okay if I mention you to the guy I have a crush on?


From RADICAL-SAN
Subject
I was so surprised the other day, so I didn't say anything, but the guy I like also reads your blog.

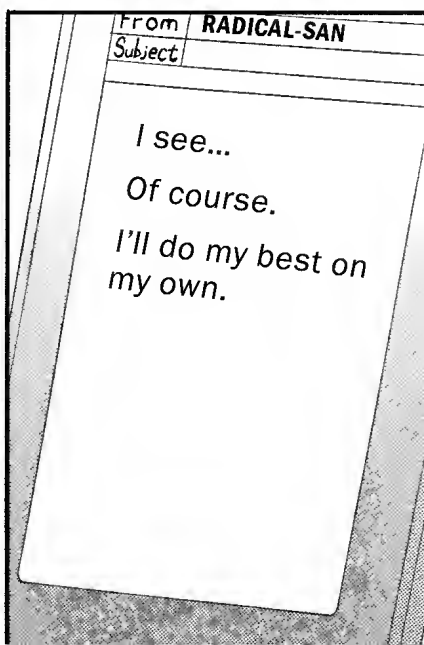
What? Why would she talk about me?

どばっ
PANIC
What? They've talked that much already?


I have to tell her not to ever talk about me...! Ever!
I'll just die if Hiro finds out!


BZN

SIGH


From RADICAL-SAN
Subject
I see...
Of course.
I'll do my best on my own.

She could just ask me directly.
Why is she texting me?
Chi-chan...
INCOMING MAIL
From CHI-CHAN
Subject
What did you talk about with Oda-kun?
What should I tell her?
I wonder if Oda-kun said something to Chi-chan.
FWSH

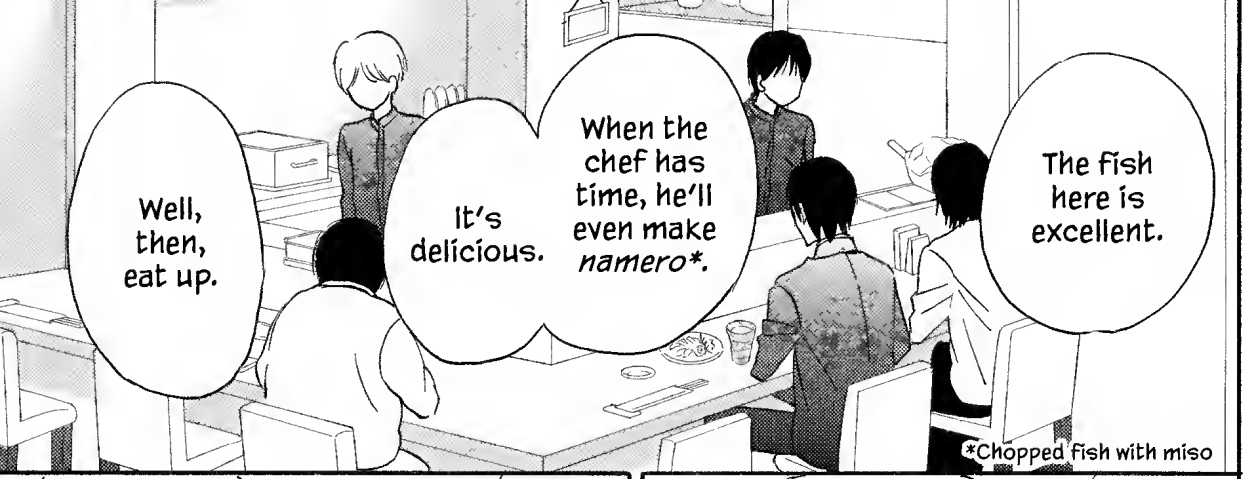
Huh?
When do you want to go see a movie?
Motomiya.
ドカッ
THUMP
Is it because I said I like you?
I...I can't go.
Sorry.
It makes me really happy, but...
Sorry.
...
In this situation...

...I don't know what to say.
Whatever I say, it'll just hurt him.
And I know what it feels like...
...to be hurt.
...
Oh, Chi-chan.
RATTLE
DASH
Huh?
What's going on? Is she okay?
A look that says you can talk to me about anything

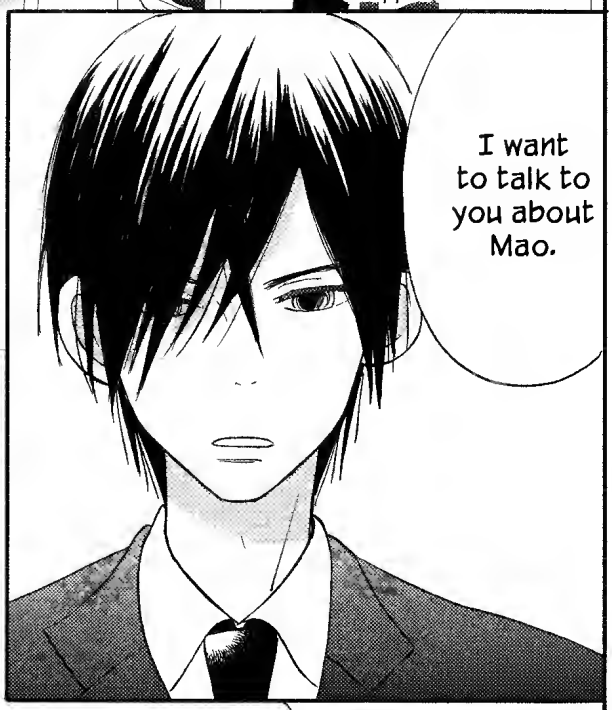
Hey.
It's about you, though.
Bye!
Bye!
DROOP
Oh, no... Not at all.
Sugimoto-san, is something wrong?

Huh?
Oh, would you like to join us for dinner?
I know a good place.
Next time, okay?
What? Who cares? It's just your sister, right?
That's not it.
I'm sorry, I've got plans today.
DING
ピンポーン
DONG
Okay! Next time!

I'm sorry for suddenly stopping by.
No, I just came to talk about something.
What are you doing here, Hiro? Did something happen with Mao?
There might be something she needs to know.
I wanted to talk with him before going out with Mao.
Wanna go for a drink?
Oh, I'm free.
Are you free to talk now?


The fish here is excellent.
When the chef has time, he'll even make *namero*.
It's delicious.
Well, then, eat up.
*Chopped fish with miso

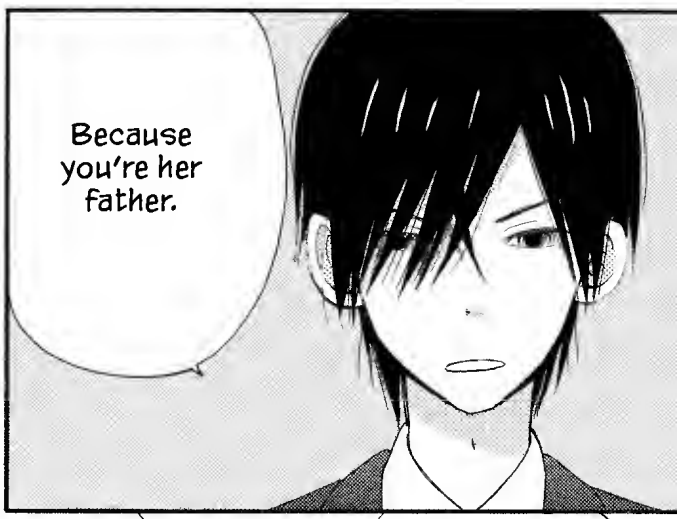
Mao?
You want to marry her or something?


I want to talk to you about Mao.

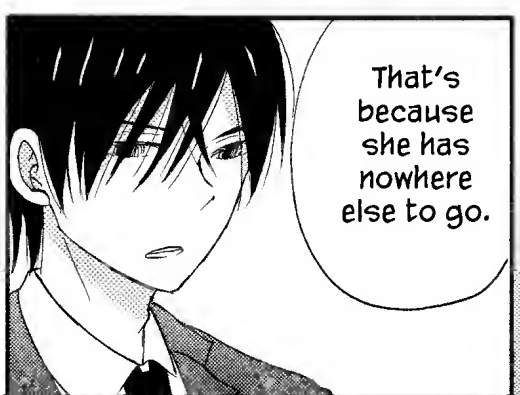
The truth is, Mao actually wants to live with you.
...
Not at all.
...

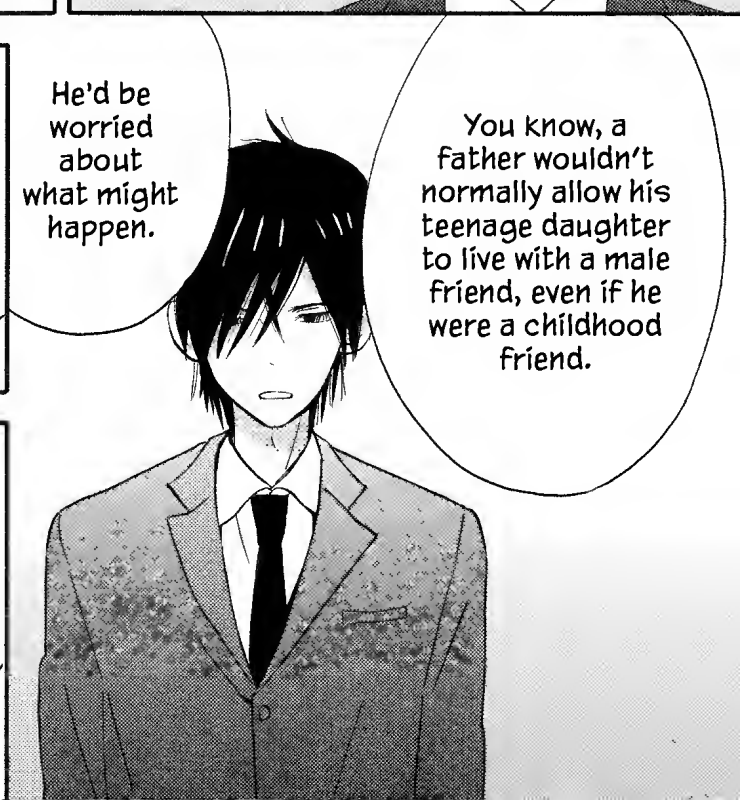
I wonder why.
Oh?

Chef! Please bring me my *shochu*.
Yes, sir!


Because you're her father.

Mao wants to stay there.


That's because she has nowhere else to go.


He'd be worried about what might happen.
You know, a father wouldn't normally allow his teenage daughter to live with a male friend, even if he were a childhood friend.

...
You're free to do what you want.
I trust you, Hiro.
You've worked hard to protect that house.
...
That would be a good thing, right?
I mean, your brother and sister will have to change schools at some point...
Then you can ask for them to leave their current homes to come live with you.
Well, well, drink up. Drink up.

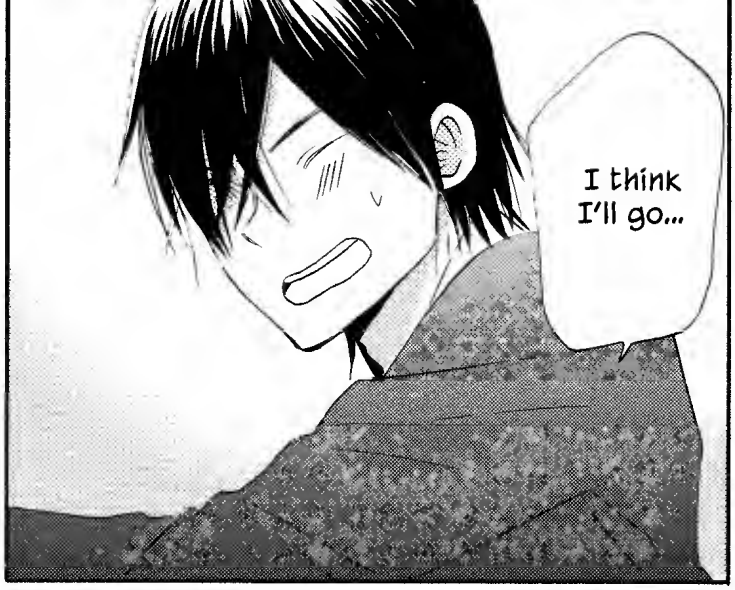
What the heck...
...is wrong with this guy?!
Getting married is an option, too, though.
At the end of the day, you want a family, don't you, Hiro?
I didn't...
...come here...
...to talk about that.
You are Mao's true family...!

...thought to ask if Mao could come home.

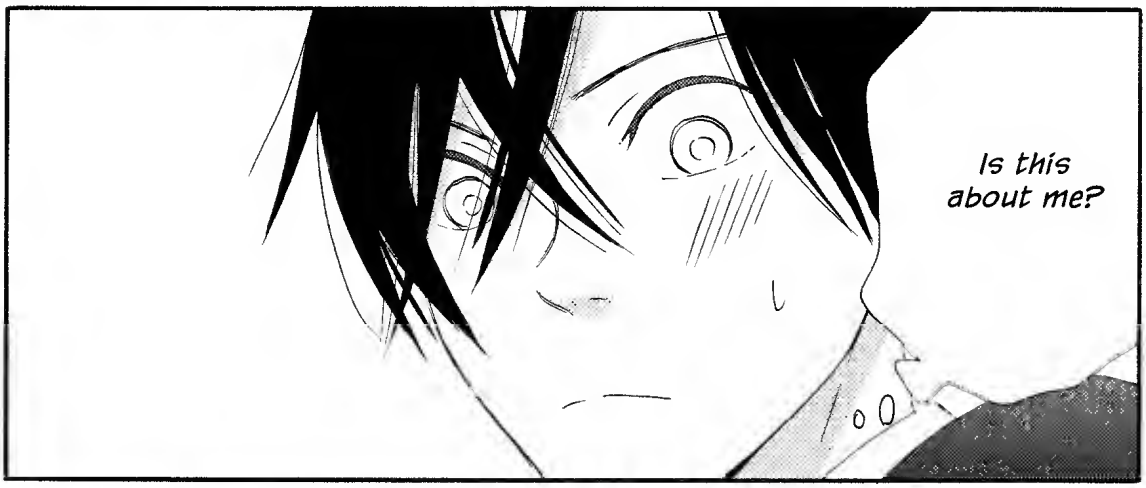
He never once...

A man like this...
I'm home!
A man like this has a family...
A man like this is a father...
Oh. You're back late.
...
Mao.
PACE うろ…
Oh, Croquette, I'm home.

Does she know I went to see her dad?
PACE
うろ
PACE
うろ
What's going on?
I don't get it.
?
You don't notice anything?
What is it? Something about your dress?
What?
Ouch.
SHOVE
ばしん
But it's my first time ever.
Except in my school uniform.


I think I'll go...

SHOVE
ばしっ
SHOVE
ばしっ
わんっ
WOOF
Why are you hitting me?!
OW, OW, OW, OW.
わんっ
WOOF


Is this about me?

とん
THUNK
Uh...?! What?!
Ugh, ugh...
You're heavy.
Yeah, I'm kinda weighed down.

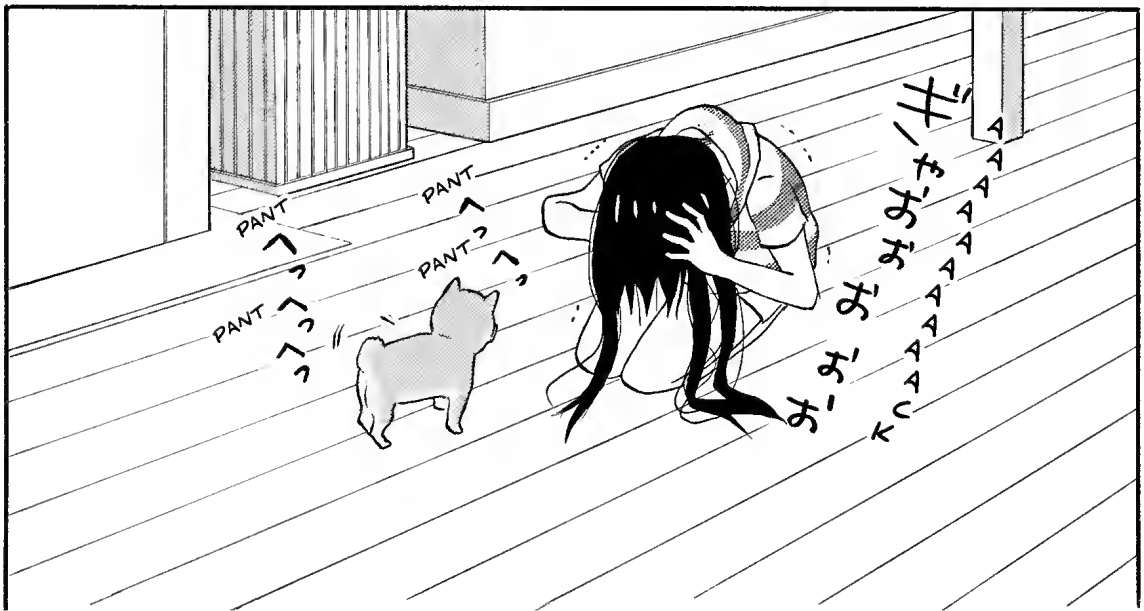
Hiro.
Did something happen?
PAT

...like that?
...be rejected...
...does she have to...
Why...
...are so very...
Her hands...
...warm.

TUG
Sorry.
Get away from me, you drunkard!
Yeah, I had a few drinks.
Huh? What?
Hiro, you smell like alcohol.
Why am I apologizing?
I wanted to hold her.

story
10
The Ideal Date

"I'm sorry."


PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
おおおお

Wakaba-chan, Croquette, what do you think?
PANT
PANT
PANT
WOOF!
わん！
And we have a date tomorrow, Croquette!
？？
Wait. Maybe it's not a date?
You were watching?!
Are you having a strategy meeting?
Oh.
むー GRR
むー GRR
Okay. I see.
Okay.
ちしゃ SHH
ちしゃ SHH
むー GRR
むー GRR

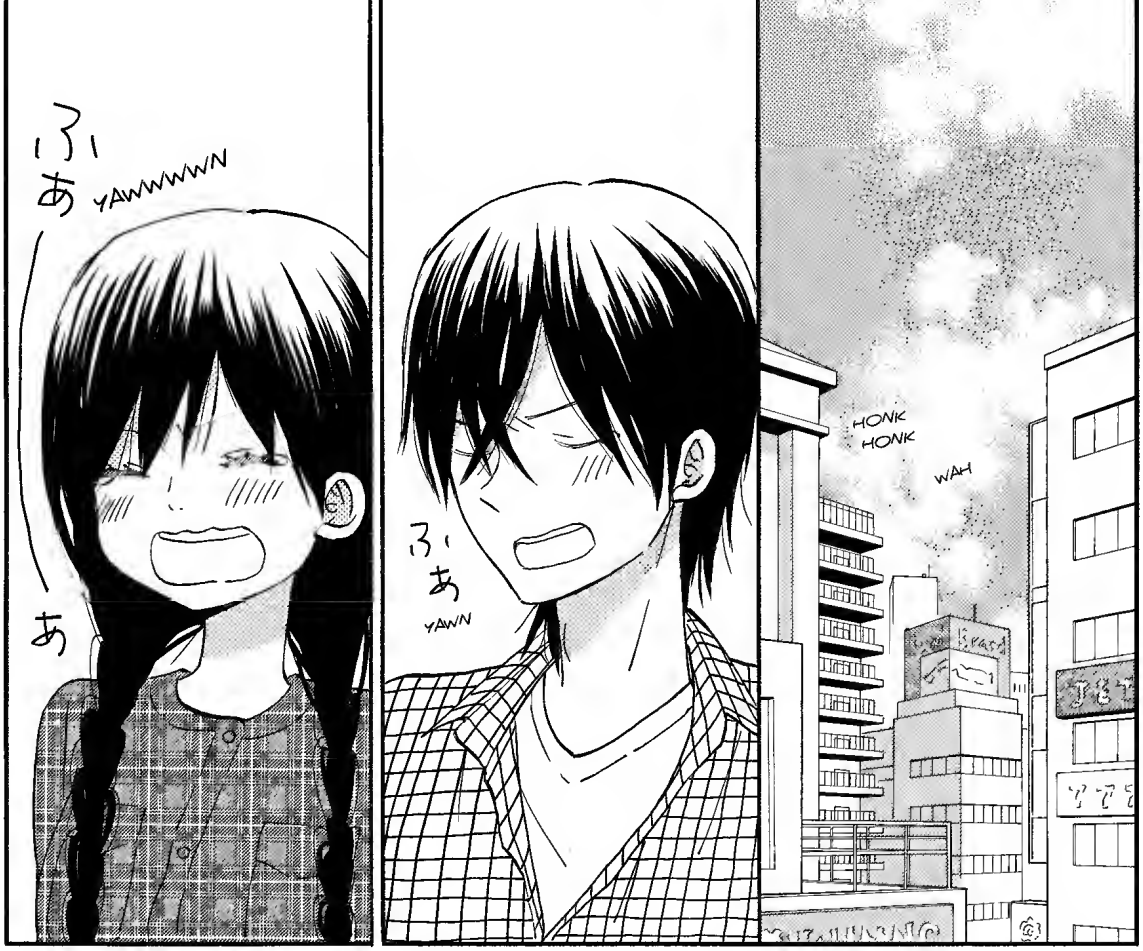
You're in the living room. What do you expect?
You have an early morning tomorrow.
It's time to go to bed.
O-okay.
G-good... night.
Oh.
Ah...
Um...
I was drunk earlier.
I'm sorry.
Even if he says he's sorry...
Good night.

...of his hand...

...touching my shoulder...

How about you, Hiro?

...won't go away.


ふぁ
YAWWWWN
あ
ふぁ
YAWN
HONK
HONK
WAH

You're obviously lying, Hiro.
Age tells all.
I slept fine.

That was a big yawn. Did you get enough sleep last night?
I slept fine.
What about you, Hiro?
2F

COME ON
かまえっ
Is he gonna fight me now?!

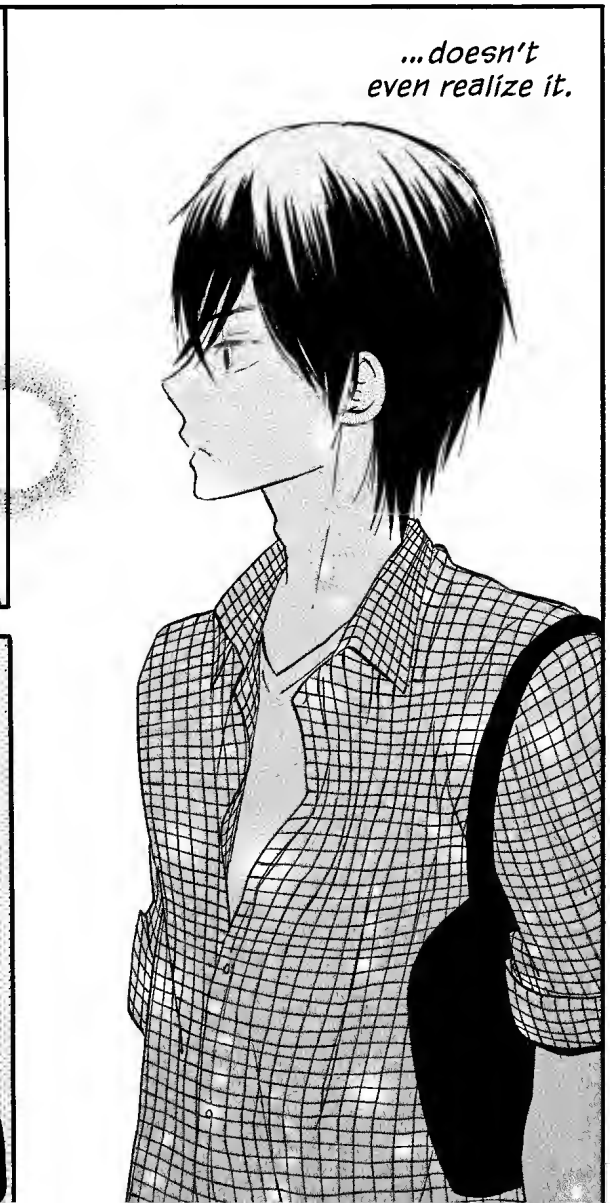
But those dark eye circles...
Don't say that like I'm old!

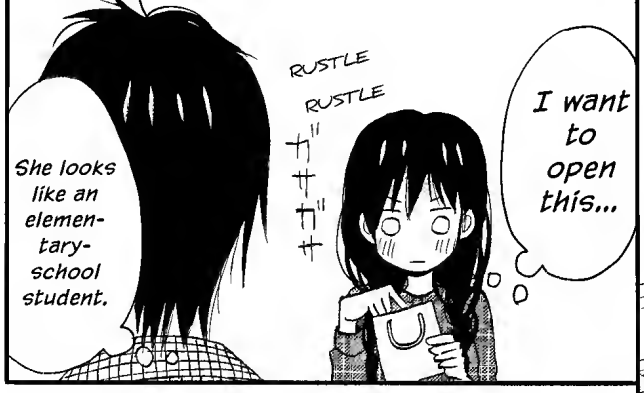
...
Huh?
Hiro is acting strange, after all.
Oh, a new shop opened up here.
SALE
Huh?
It's Chon-mame!
What's with that name?
I made it up.
You can't do that.
It's so ugly.
Ah!

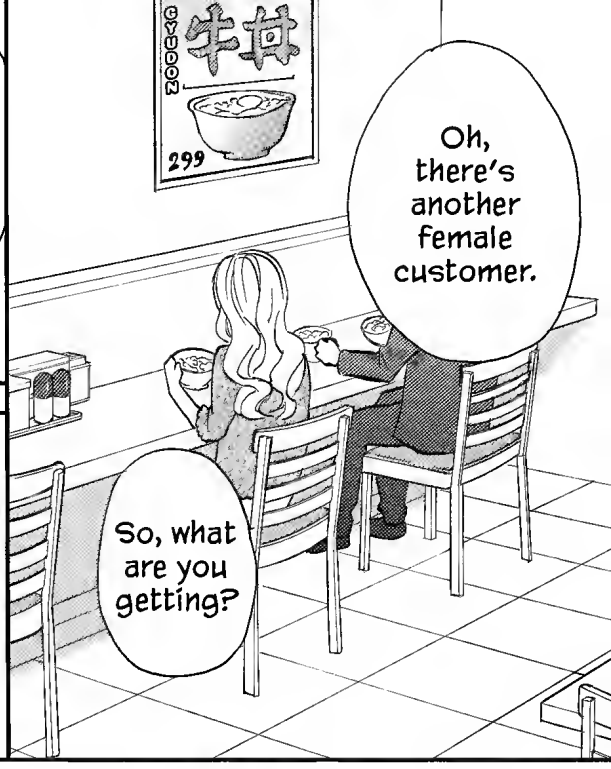
*Approximately $20.00

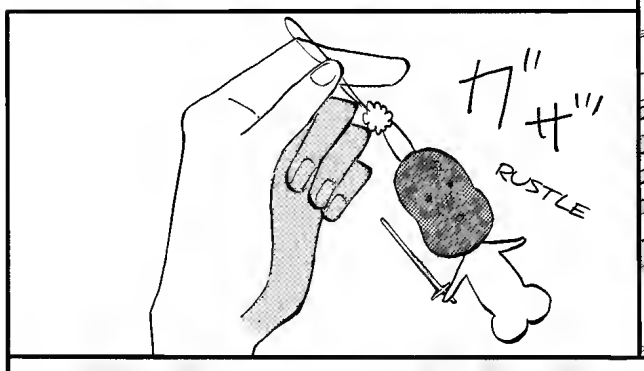
Huh?
W-why did you buy it for me?
GRIND
GRIND
GRIND
GRIND
Just be happy.
Or do you not want it?
I want it!
...feels like...
...a date?
But...
...it really, really...
Just be happy?

*Rice topped with beef







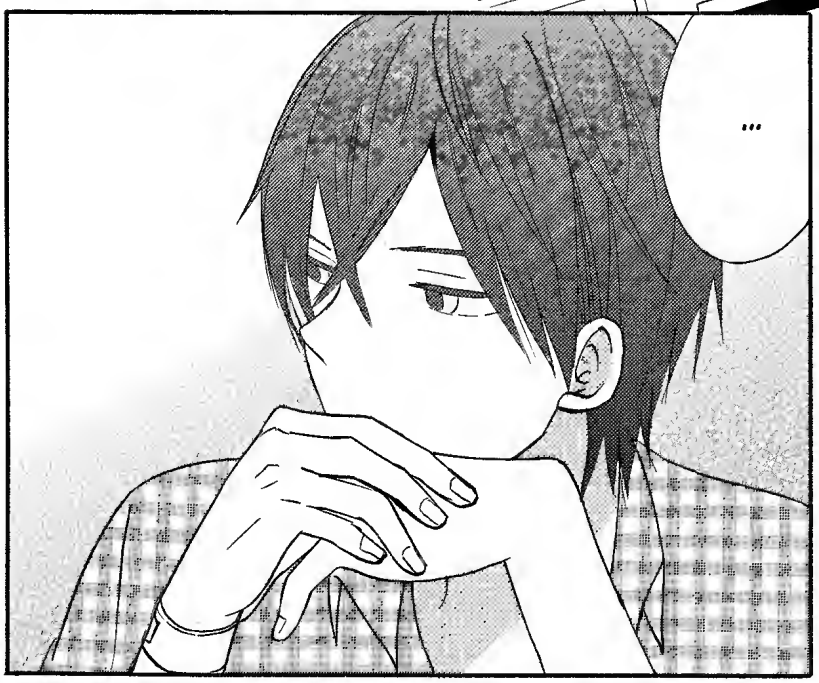


What should I do?

You say it's not cute, but you're still gonna use it?

I'll strap it onto something even if it's not cute.

...feeling of happiness?
...do I stop this...
How...
はふ
GOBBLE
Mao, what do you like so much about period dramas?
MUNCH MUNCH もぐもぐ
Hurry up and eat.
The movie is starting soon.
I was hoping it would give me something to talk about with my dad, but I ended up really liking them.
I see.
My dad liked them, so we watched them together.
はふ
GOBBLE



...he relates to me.

I think...

Today...

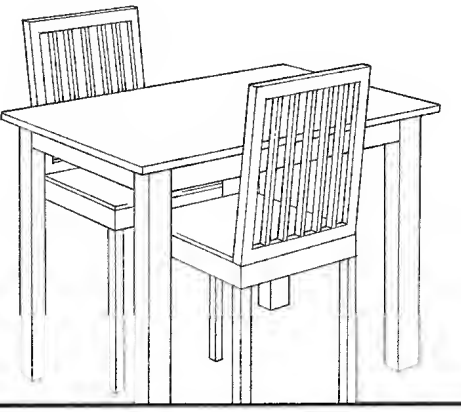
...really...

That's why he's been so nice.

That's why he invited me to live with him.

All this time.

Not just now.



...isn't a date at all.

CHATTER

CHATTER

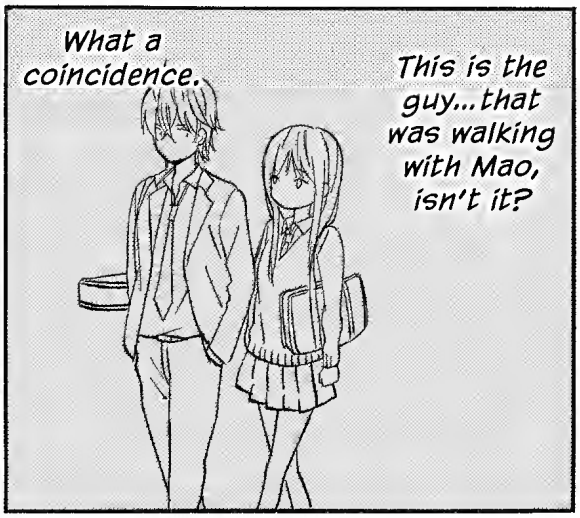
FOOD&DRI

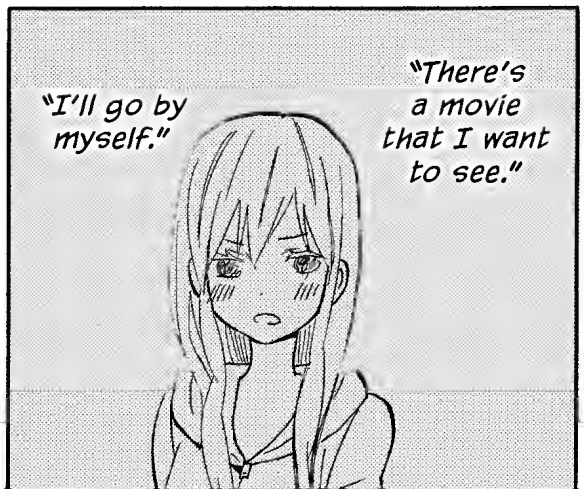
There are a lot of people.
Is history in the making with historical dramas?
History's in the making with historical dramas!
Mao, what do you want to drink?
Oolong tea.
Watch our stuff
Okay.
Don't take that so seriously.
It was just a joke
I'll go buy us some drinks.
History's in the making with historical dramas!
ざわ
CHATTER
ざわ
CHATTER
Excuse me.
Me, too.
JINGLE
JINGLE

?

!!

Is this the guy that confessed his feelings to Mao?
Or maybe it isn't a coincidence?


What a coincidence.
This is the guy... that was walking with Mao, isn't it?


"I'll go by myself."
"There's a movie that I want to see."

A girl?
What's wrong?
Oh, it's fine now.
I'm sure it wouldn't be a good thing to be seen with Mao.
We should avoid them.
Should I tell Mao about this?
I don't know.

Pardon me... I must leave.

It's not that interesting.
I'm sleepy...
Come this way!
I can't... resist...
sleepy
YAWN
ふぁ
What?! He's crying!
I feel bad for Hiro.
BLINK
No hesitation
The fight scenes sucked.
That doesn't sound like a high-school girl!
Let's go
That was good.
What did you think, Mao?
CHATTER
CHATTER

Let's get out of here quick.
Mao, hurry!
It's fine. Let's just go.
What about the pamph-lets?
CHATTER
CHATTER
GRAB
!

...casually holds my hand, but...

Hiro...

...would he do that with just anyone?

Motomiya!

FWIP
Huh?

Oda-kun?
What is he doing here?

GRR

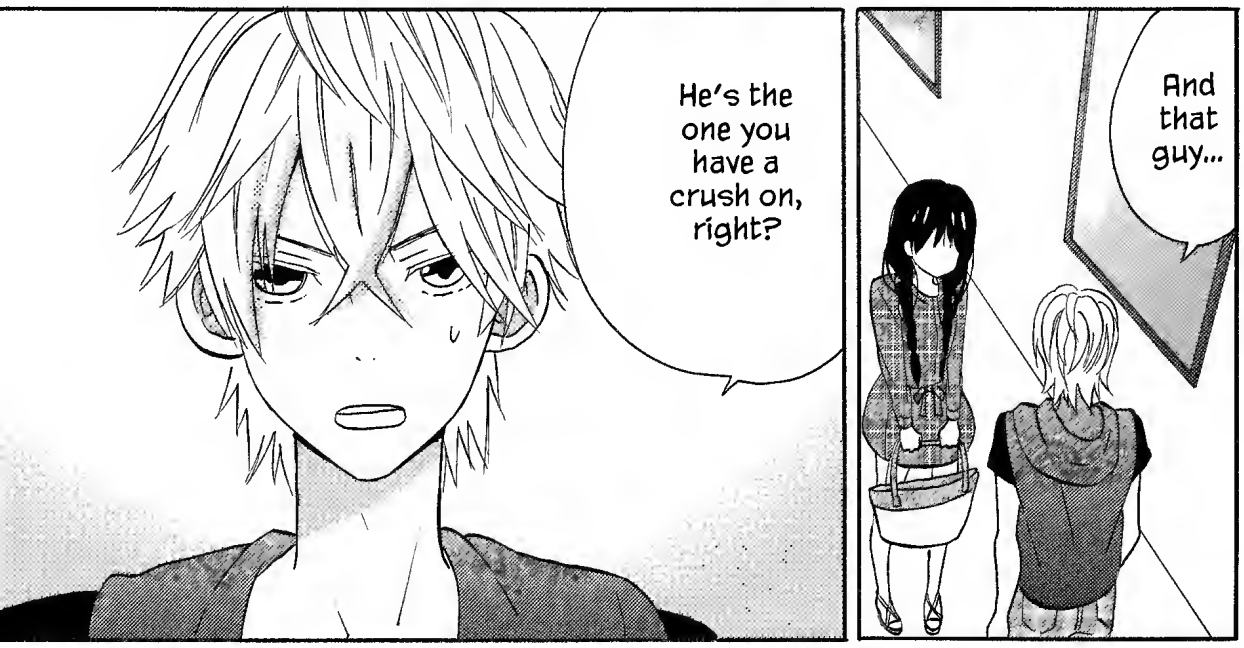
GRR
ギリ
GRR
ギリ
GRR GRR
ギリギリ
Huh?
I knew it!
You're "Mao-chan"?!
PUNCH
ドゴオ!!
Oh, this is my sis.
Ouch.
Not your "sis." Introduce me properly!
Nice to meet you. I'm his sister.
This is my sister...
Woah.
She's scary.
Nice to meet you.

...
I really wanted to see this movie.
And he happened to get tickets...
Yeah.
So, you know.
We're childhood friends, almost like siblings.
営業用
sales rep
...so I got Mao to accompany me.
But I was embarrassed to go by myself...
I mean, it's a love story.
I really wanted to see this movie, too.
That's a coinci-dence.
は
HA
...
...
And I assumed you were his girlfriend.
I assumed you were her boyfriend.

We're getting juice!
Okay?!
Huh?
Huh? Where are you going?
Huh?
Hey, we'll be right back.
So wait here!
She's a bit forceful.

I...I'm sorry.
...
...

You wouldn't go with me because you don't want to date me, right?
!!
Don't apologize, it'll just make me feel miserable.
I said I wouldn't go with you...


He's the one you have a crush on, right?
And that guy...

Oh... I'm right.
What?

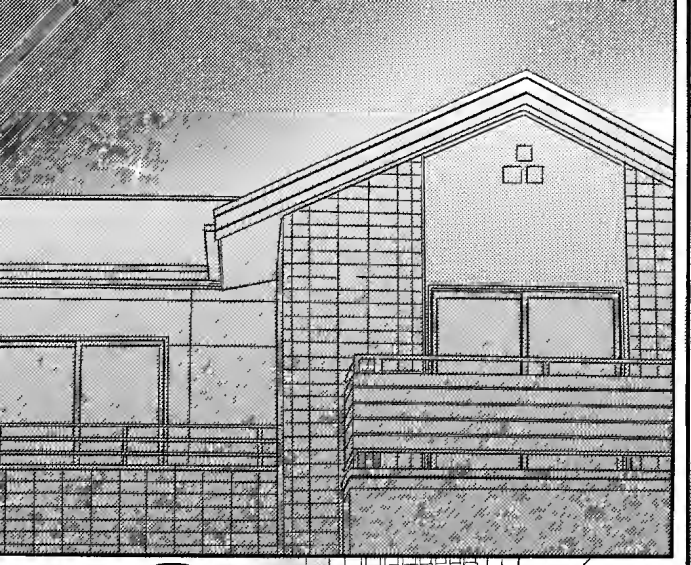
I told him how I felt once...
...and made it look like a joke.
GRR
Don't say his name.
Then why did you say he rejected you?
But Hiro doesn't know that I like him.
You're always looking down... Or so it seems.
Yeah.
Sounds complicated.
...

Even when I tried to make conversation, you ignored me.
You never even smiled.
Ever since first year started.
I have no intention of helping you with him.
It's a secret.
Just once, you had a different expression on your face.
But I can cheer you up, at least.
?

When she's confused and doesn't know what to do...
...she says to just think about the ideal scenario.
She says things will automatically work out that way.
On the other hand, my sister isn't one to stop herself.
Motomiya, what would be the ideal scenario for you?
The ideal...
...scenario...
We're back!

Were you able to talk?
Yeah... but...
I told you we were buying juice.
What were you guys doing?
Argh!
Argh!
Croquette is waiting. Ready to go home?
Yeah.
Yeah.

I'd be able to be straightforward with Hiro.



I wouldn't run away.

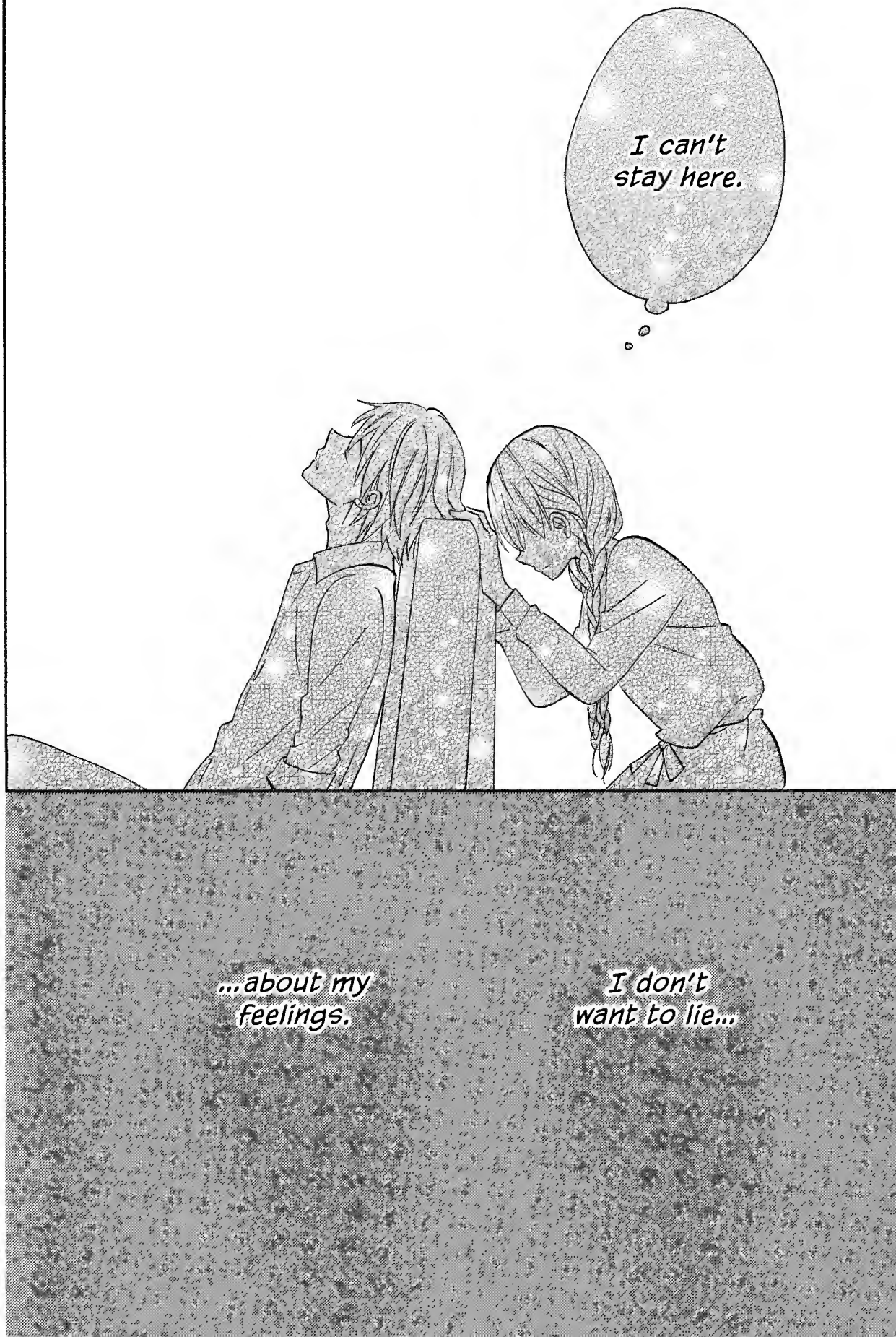
I'd confront my dad and return home.

I'm not being nice!
Don't try to be nice! It's fine!
Don't make strange efforts for me.
But...
I want to contribute, too.
What's that supposed to mean?
Then act like a high-school girl.
Nothing.
It's just that, when I saw you with that guy, I realized you're a high-school girl.
I am a high-school girl...
Oh, by the way...
That reminds me.

How did you know?!
He's the guy who confessed his feelings to you, right?
I knew it.
Why does everyone guess it right away?
It's written on your face.
He got the wrong idea about me, right?
Did you correct him?
Yeah, I did.
He wasn't wrong.

His sister was so thoughtful.
Did you really go buy juice?
Yeah, oh...
His sister has a very strong personality.
And he seems like a nice guy, too.
Which one should we buy? Eeny, meeny, miny, moe...
I was pretty surprised.
We really did buy juice.
...shouldn't worry about me.
You... Mao.
Hiro?
What are you talking about?

Thank you for today.
That's right, he didn't get much sleep last night.
Good night.
zzz
His battery died.
If I think about what I'd wish for...
I want to stay by his side.
...I wish I could tell Hiro how I really feel.


I can't stay here.
...about my feelings.
I don't want to lie...

story 11 A Heart-to-Heart

You're so cute, Mao.
I love you, Mao.
I said you're cute.
Wh...what did you just say?!
Don't say it twice!

Mao...
Marry me.
What?!
Don't be shy.
SMACK
I want to be with you forever.
This house will be yours, as well.
I'm so happy.
SQUEEZE

She's asleep.
Mao?
What are you doing...?
GROAN
GROAN
GROAN
ばっ DASH
ばりっ LIFT
Guess I'll take a bath.
Victory is mine.
すやあ SNORE

Hiro! You jerk! Why didn't you wake me up?
WHOOSH
It'll be your fault if I'm late!
URK
VRR
Why? 'Cause you were sound asleep. And besides, we take turns bathing.
And you go in second, remember?
SHHHHH
I have to hurry.
It feels like I had a nice dream...
I can't seem to remember it, though.

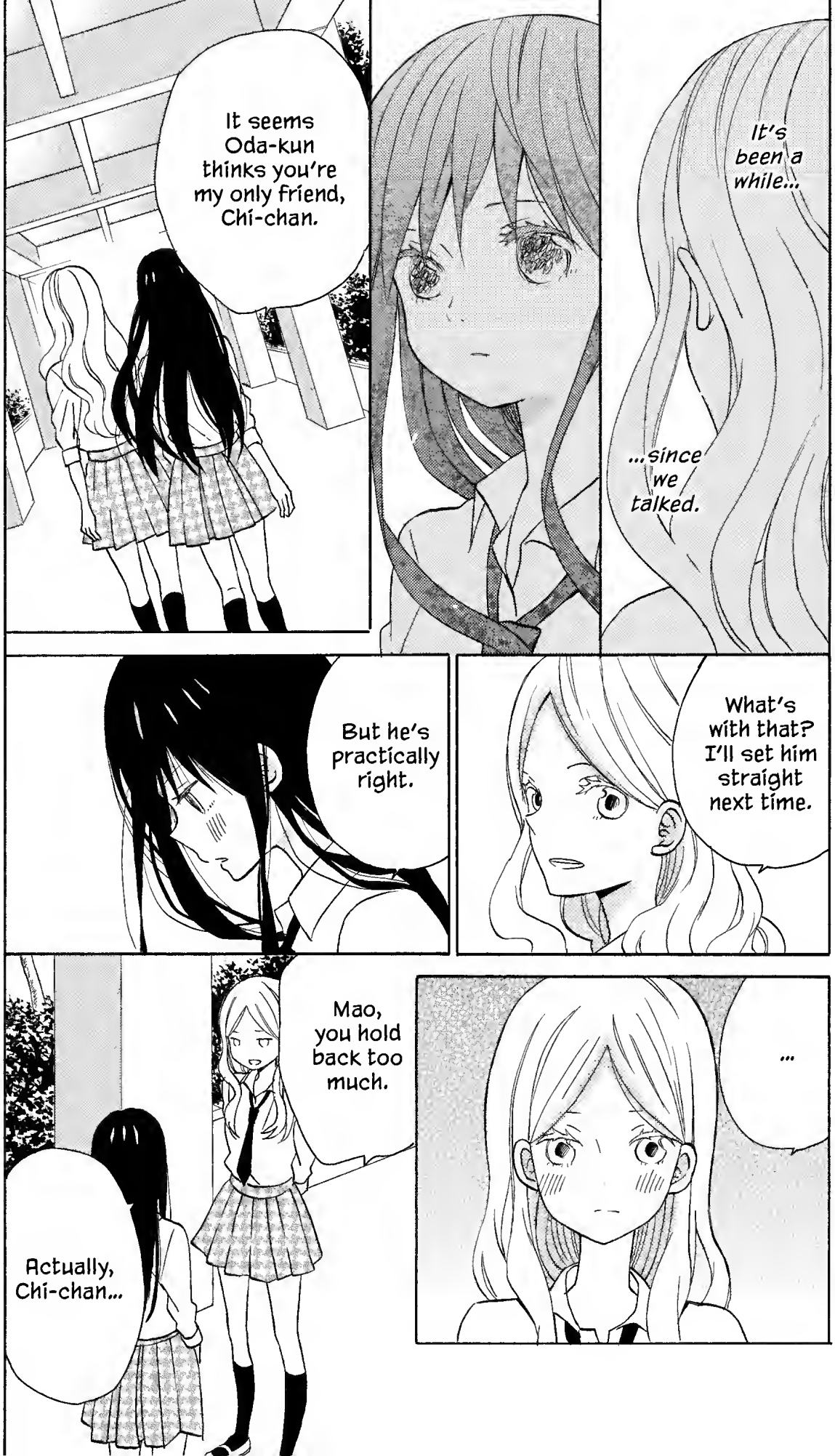
A dream about my dad?
No, I don't think so.
What if...
...
BLUB
BLUB
...my dad...
What will I do?
...refuses to talk to me?
But I have to talk to him.
Nothing will happen if I don't talk to him.
I have to tell Hiro, too...
...that I want to talk to my dad.

Um...
Hurry up and eat.
Hiro.
CLAP
Thanks for the food!
A- actually, never mind.
?
...
...

I don't remember.
Don't fall asleep at school.
So, what did you dream about?
By the way, I had a dream while I was snoozing on the couch.
I think it was a good dream.
Mao, I love you
...
Oh!
HAZY
What's wrong?!
Was it a nightmare?!
...
キーン DING
コーン DONG
カーン DANG

Good morning, Motomiya.
That dream was embarrassing.
I couldn't tell Hiro, after all.
Way too crazy.
That guy I met yesterday...
He's the guy you and Chihiro have a crush on, right?
"Urk"? What's that about?
Nothing. Just "urk."
Urk... Good morning.
SIGH
CLATTER
...
For two friends to fall for the same guy, that's harsh.
What?! You mean Chi-chan?

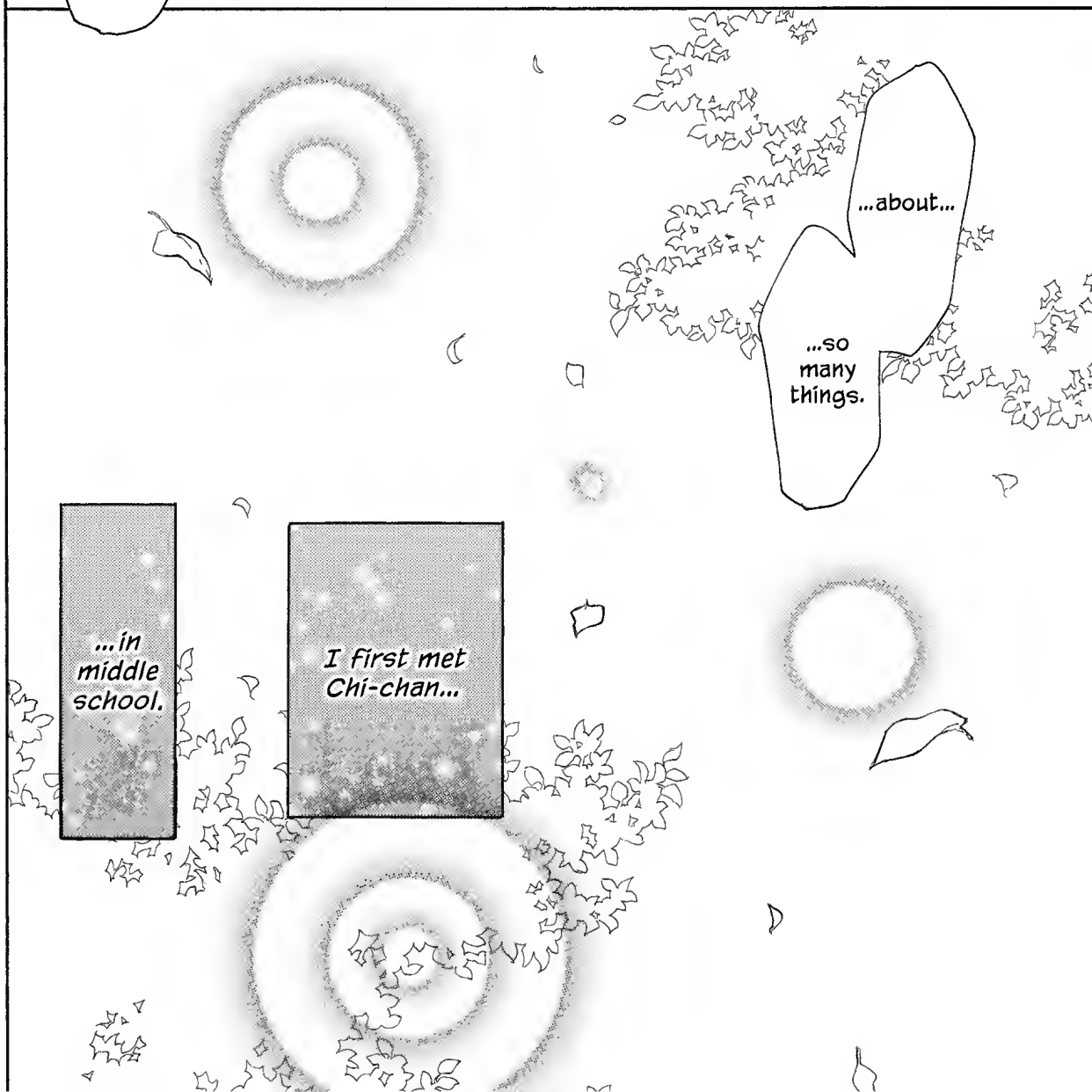
Good morning, Chihiro.
Good morning, Chi-chan.
I wasn't talking to you.
Right!
You were, actually.
I wasn't talking to you, either!
Good morning!
You've got things all wrong...
Chi-chan.
H-hey!
Let's go, Mao.
I want to talk with you.


It seems Oda-kun thinks you're my only friend, Chi-chan.
It's been a while...
...since we talked.
But he's practically right.
What's with that? I'll set him straight next time.
Mao, you hold back too much.
...
Actually, Chi-chan...

Yeah, I do.
Do you like...
Oda-kun?
What?
Yes, you are.
I'm not holding back.
So what?
Are you gonna keep holding back?

I mean, aren't you hiding something from me, Mao?
Oda-kun likes you, Mao.
I want...
...to tell her...
...about Hiro.

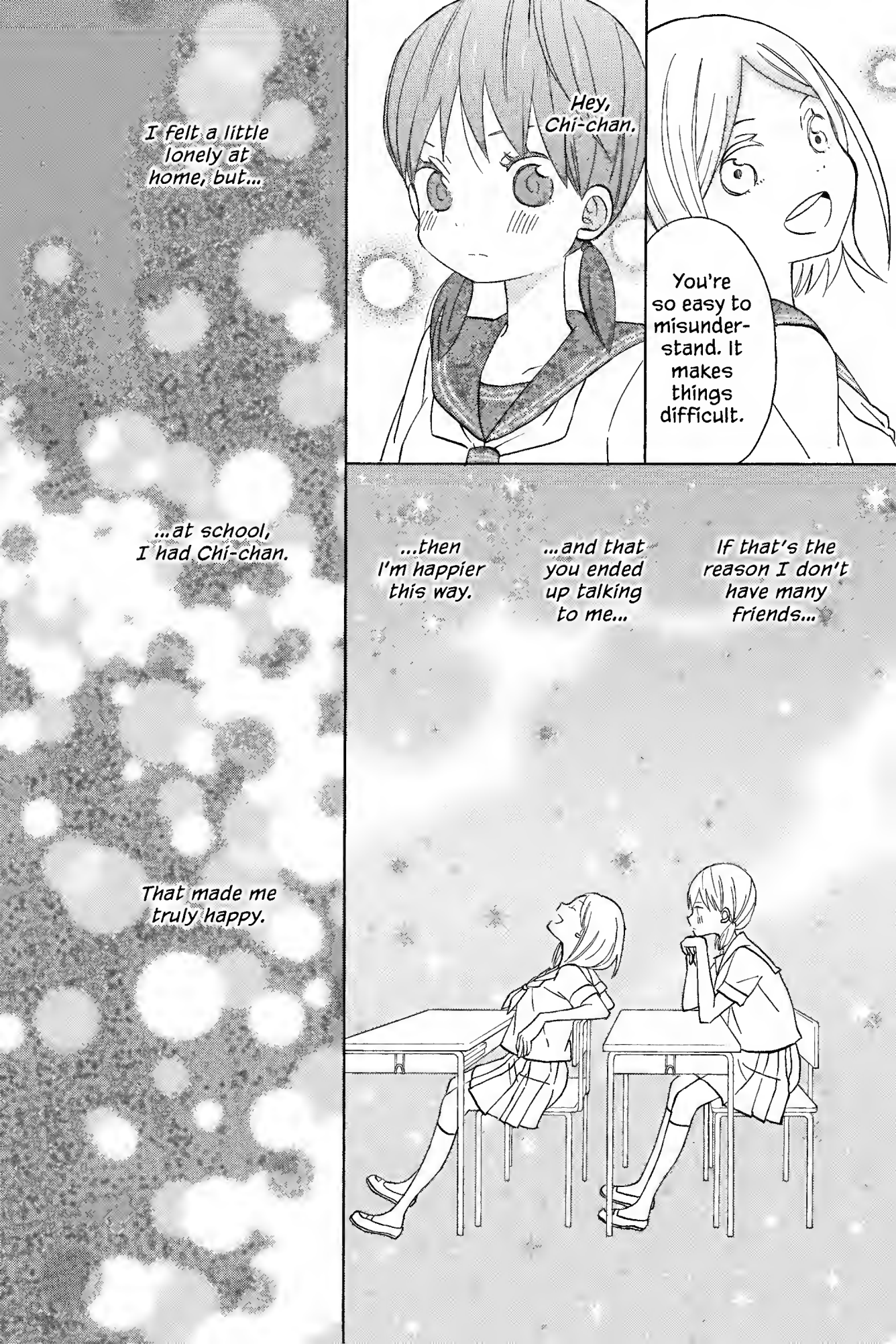
I...
I...
...really...
...have to talk to you...
...


...about...
...so many things.
...in middle school.
I first met Chi-chan...

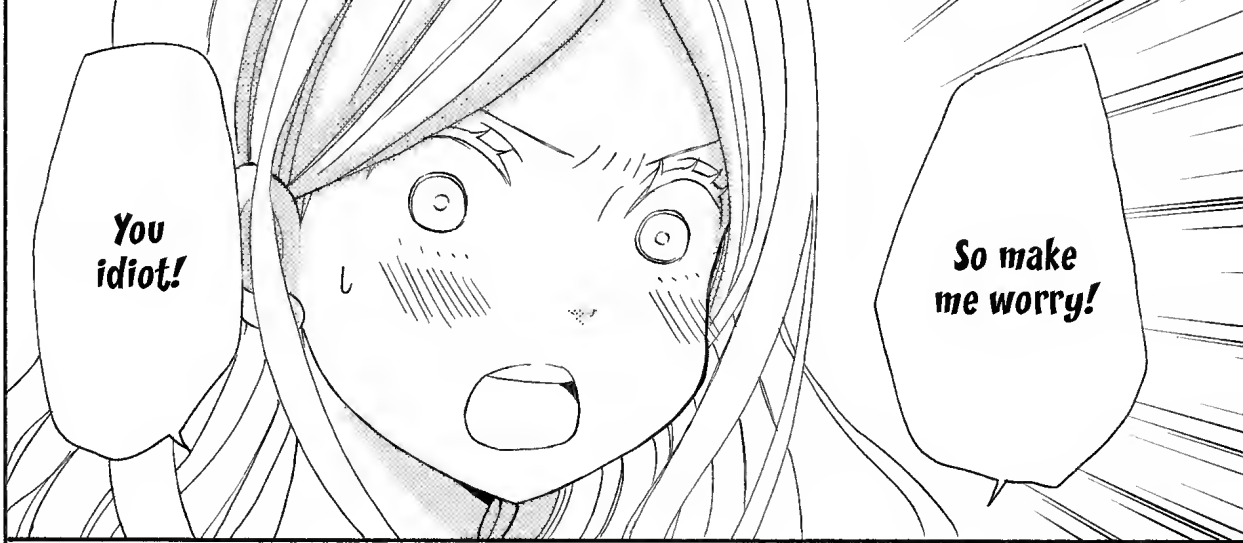
"Yeah, so cute!"
"Oh, that's so cute."
The charms that brought other girls together...
Cutesy objects didn't pull at my heartstrings and made it hard for me to join in.
I didn't know anything about regular TV shows or comedies.
All I ever watched were period dramas.
I was confused.
There was a boy who spoke to me occasionally.
He used to call me a wide-eyed monster in elementary school, then suddenly said he liked me.
It seemed like she was never alone.
Chi-chan had lots of friends.
SPIN
Motomiya-san.
Then Chi-chan's seat was changed, and she sat at the desk in front of mine.

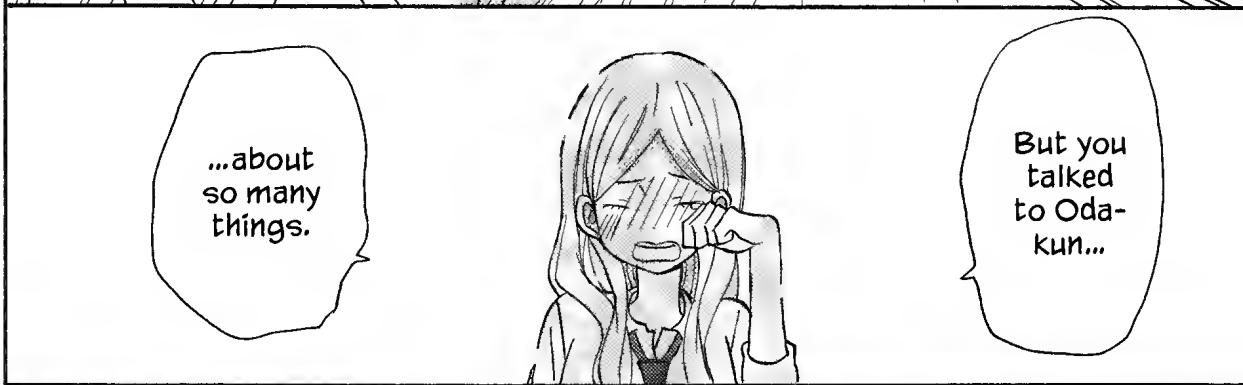
Talking without the teacher noticing...
Chi-chan whispered to me throughout class.
...was fun.
The cigarette shop.
Where did you buy it?
Wow! What an unusual pencil case...
The cigarette shop?!
You know...
SPIN
By the way...
SPIN
Mao!
SPIN
It's the first time anyone's called me by my first name...
...other than my mom and dad or the Nakamuras.
?
That was a big deal for me.
Embarrassing.

Look!
I got a matching one!
Friendship is...
It's cute.
...embarrassing.
I heard that Motomiya-san rejects boys by acting confused.
!!!!
So scary!
You've got it wrong.
Really?
That boy used to tease Mao in elementary school.
What's wrong?
Aaaah.

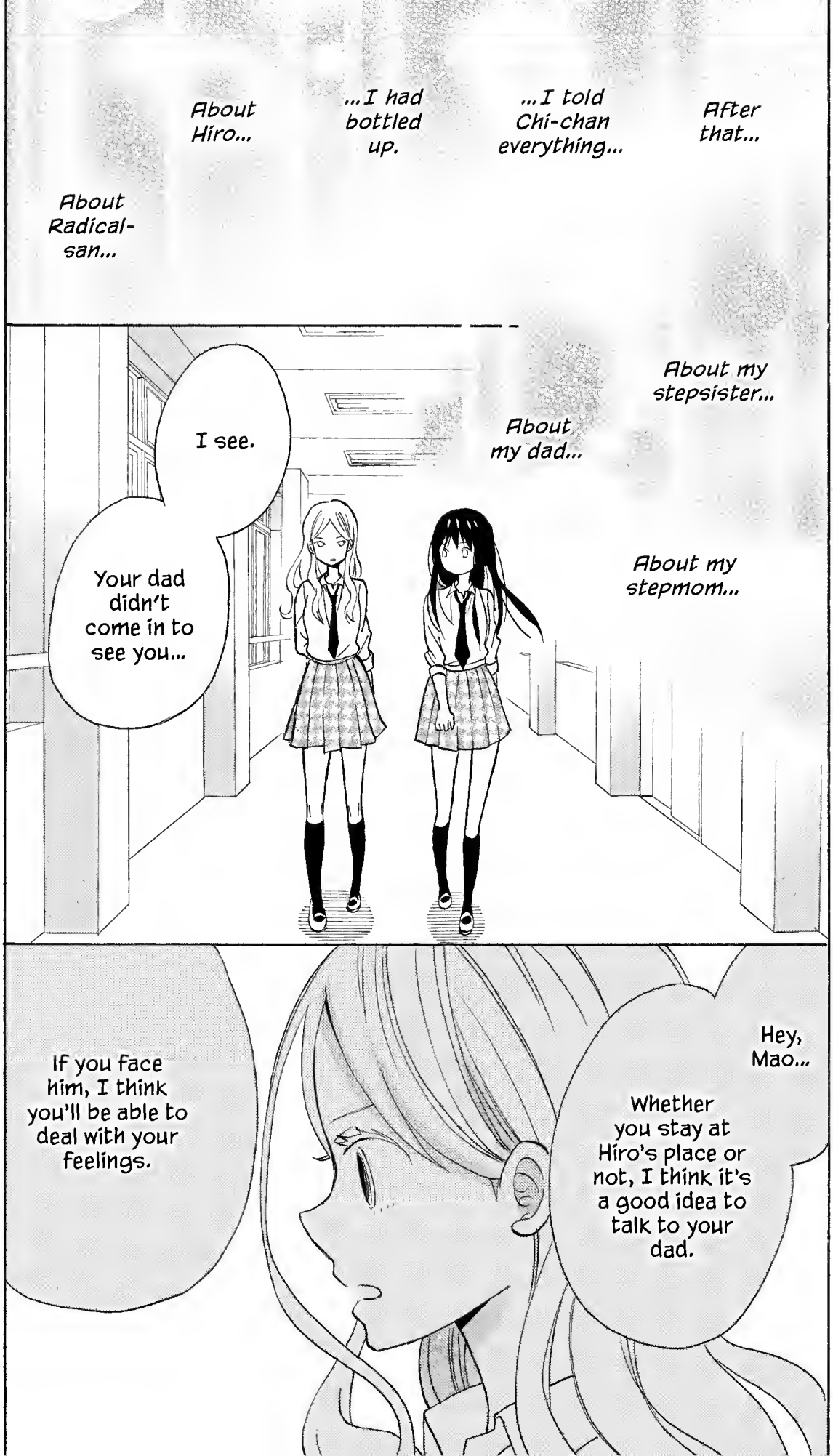

I felt a little lonely at home, but...
...at school, I had Chi-chan.
That made me truly happy.
Hey, Chi-chan.
You're so easy to misunderstand. It makes things difficult.
If that's the reason I don't have many friends...
...and that you ended up talking to me...
...then I'm happier this way.

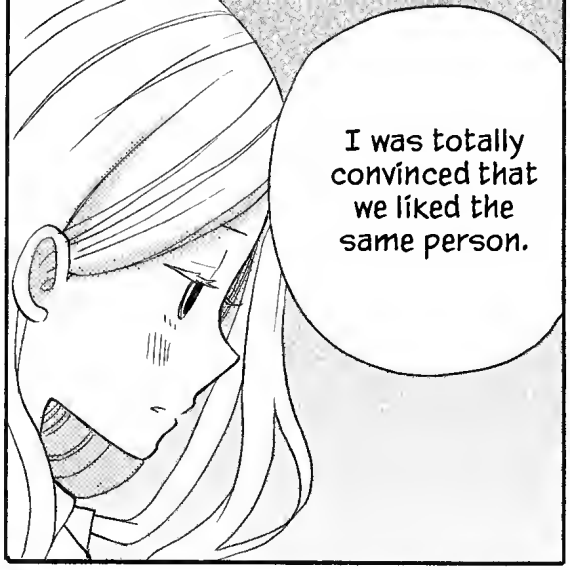
I-it's embarrassing, but...
...I couldn't get along with my new stepfamily.
So, I'm living with a childhood friend now.
He's a lot older than me, but I've fallen for him.
I asked Oda-kun for advice, and he ended up telling me that he likes me.
If you like him, Chi-chan...
...I thought it would hurt you...
...so I couldn't tell you.
...
About your home situation, too?
I knew it would just make you worry.


You idiot!
So make me worry!

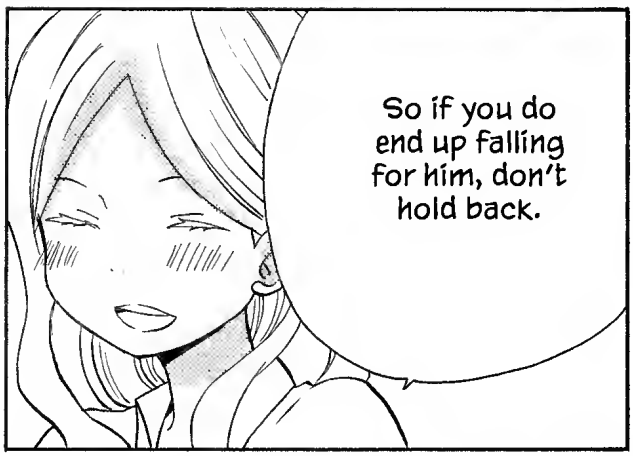

...about so many things.
But you talked to Oda-kun...

I'm sorry.
It'll make you worry a lot...
...but I'll tell you every-thing.
Chi-chan.
...
SQUEEZE ゆっ


About Hiro...
...I had bottled up.
...I told Chi-chan everything...
After that...
About Radical-san...
About my stepsister...
About my dad...
About my stepmom...
I see.
Your dad didn't come in to see you...
Hey, Mao...
Whether you stay at Hiro's place or not, I think it's a good idea to talk to your dad.
If you face him, I think you'll be able to deal with your feelings.


I was totally convinced that we liked the same person.

And that dummy Oda-kun totally misunderstood and made things worse.
But he was trying to be thoughtful in his own way.


So if you do end up falling for him, don't hold back.

Whoa, that's pretty mean.
Rest assured!
That would never happen...!

Of course, if you did like Oda-kun and told me about it...
...I would support you.

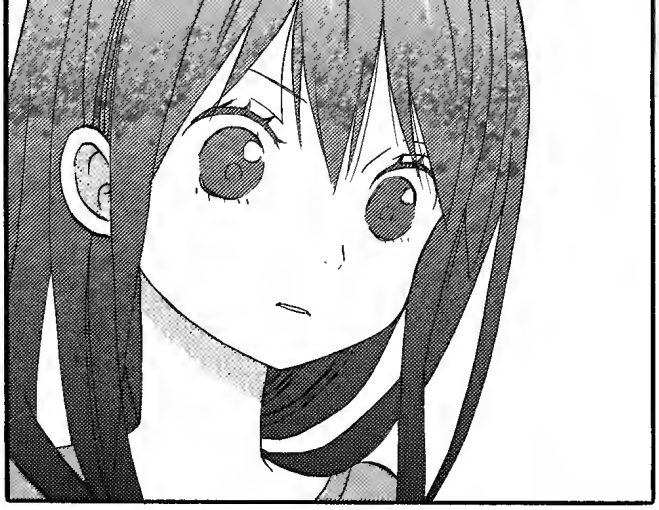
Thank you, Chi-chan.
I'm glad we talked.
Yeah.
When she said that...
...she smiled like she did in middle school.
Thank you, Chi-chan.
I'm glad we're friends.

Hiro, I want to talk with my dad.
Good luck.
Yeah.
Good luck, Mao.

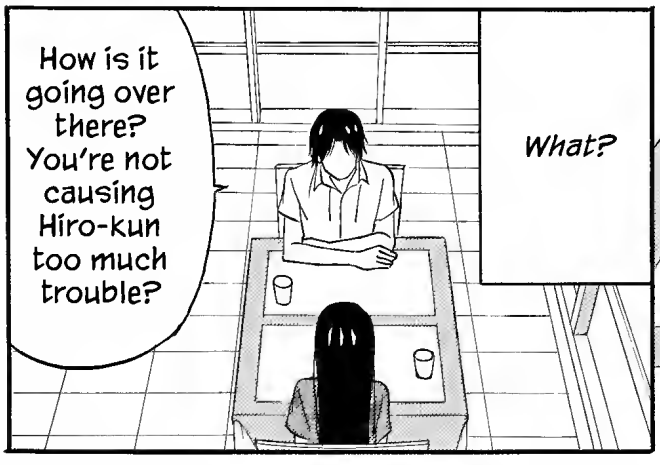
I'll go with you.
What?! It's fine! What good will it do if you come?
Actually...
...that makes me really happy.
I'm going.
Don't worry, I'll stay hidden. I won't let your dad see me.
SMOOSH
Then what are you coming for?!
Even if you try your hardest, you might lose your cool. If you do, I'll be there for you.
...

My dad promised to meet me.
I waited and waited, but he didn't come...
I was sure he wouldn't show up at all...
Please make my wish come true.
TAP
TAP
It's gonna be okay.
It's gonna be okay.
FIDGET
FIDGET
Welcome.
Hey, Mao.
My dad came.
When he saw me after so long, he smiled.
It's been a while, but I'll update my blog.

When my dad saw me...
BA-DUMP
I have to tell him.
I have to tell him.
I have to tell him...
...that I want to go back home.
...he didn't smile.
...after so long...



Mao.
There's no need to worry about me.


What?
How is it going over there? You're not causing Hiro-kun too much trouble?

Dad, I...
Since you insisted on seeing me...

You must be happy.
Unlike me, Hiro-kun is a good man.

NO...
That's not it.
Ah...

...even considered...

...never...

What is it you wanted to talk about?
So?
...that I might come home?
Huh?
You're the one who left, right?
Do you...
...hate me?

...
You and your mom, both of you left me.
It's about time you get a job and pay your own way.
Thank you...
...for coming today.
Okay.
CLATTER
カ"タ"ﾝ

Urk...
Oh?
Oh, it's you, Hiro-kun.
I didn't know you were here.
Here's the money.
Mao forgot to take it with her.
No, thanks.
What?
I always thought Mao was running away from you.

Excuse me.
But now it looks like you're the one running away from Mao.
Huh?

Hiro?
Did you hear him?
I'll get a job starting next month and pay my own way.
TMP
I'll save my money to move out eventually.
I'm sorry.
I'll be remaining in your care.

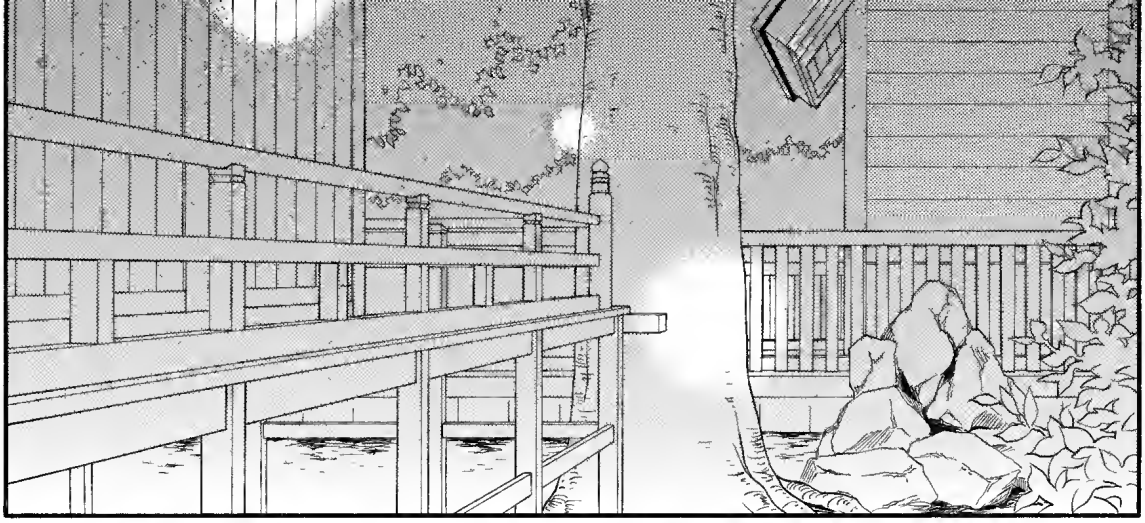
Don't take pity on me!
I don't need money.
Let's go home, Mao.
...do that...
Hiro!
Mao.
You always...
...always...
...always...

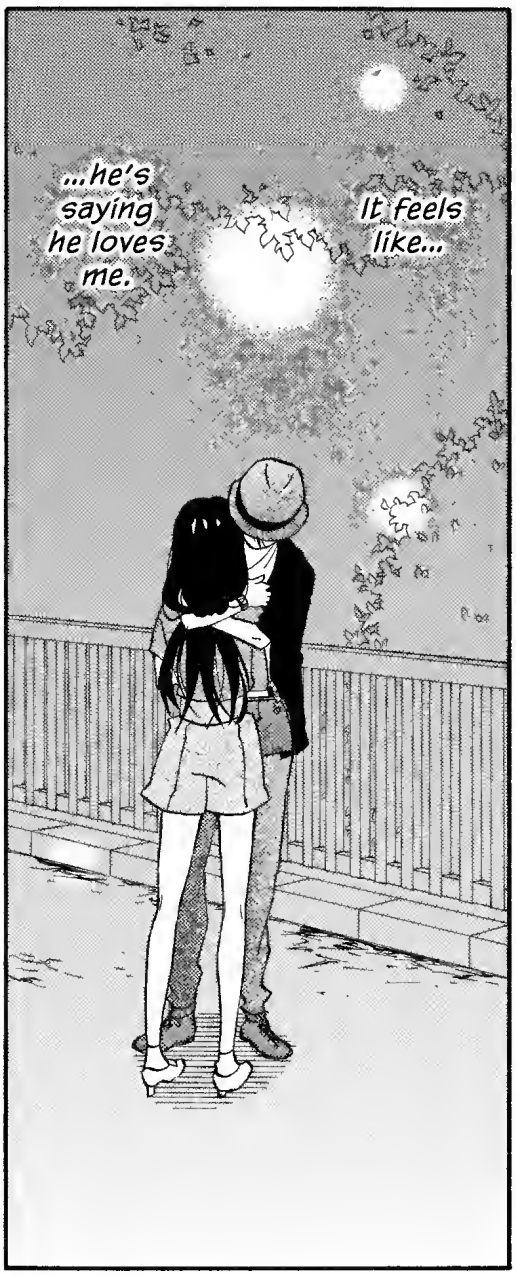
Mao, listen to me!
I want you to stay with me.

Let's go home together.
I want us to be together.

It feels like...
...he's saying he loves me.
...and remembered my dream.
...I stopped crying...
Without realizing it...

story 11
Bonds




...he's saying he loves me.
It feels like...

...
SQUEEZE
ギュっ

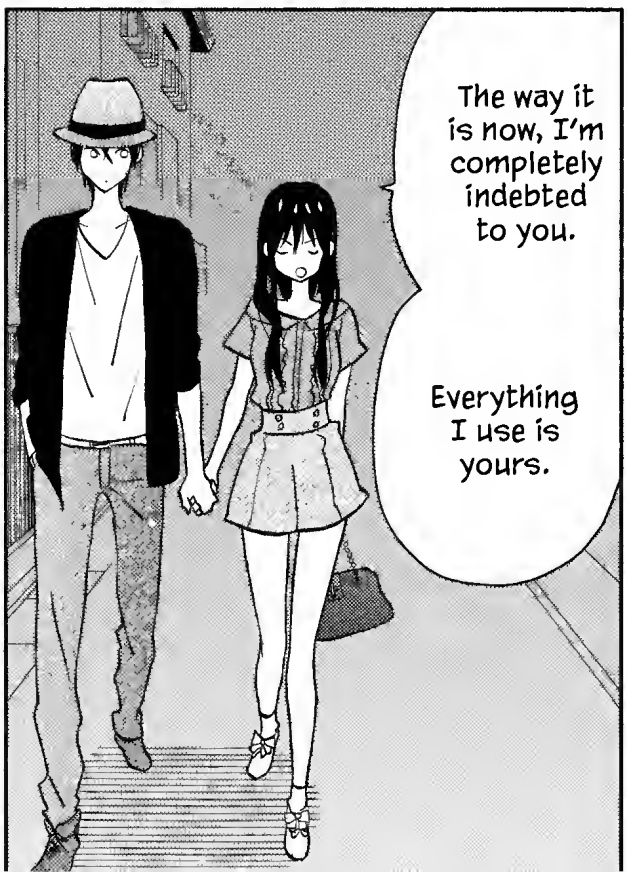
I have to let go.
I have to stop.
Gotta let go.
...
I can't breathe.
Hi-
Hiro...

SQUISH
I can't breathe!
Okay.
Sorry.
...
You're too close!

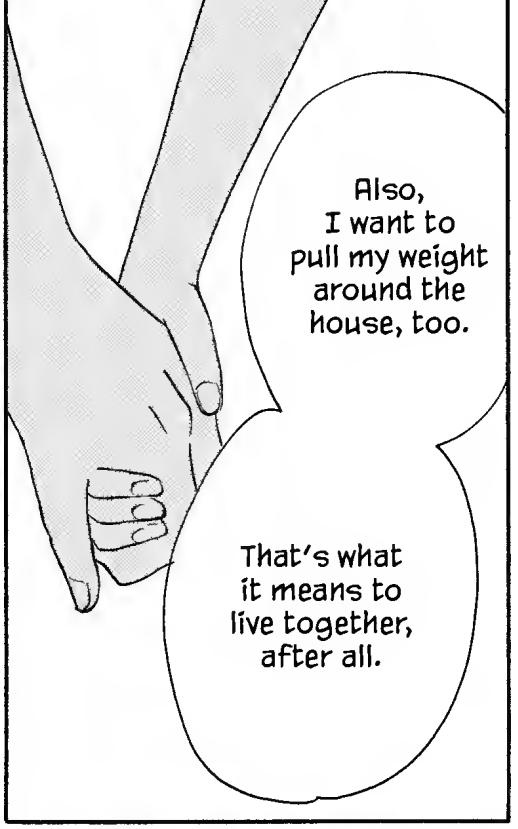
...
PINCH
What are you doing?
PULL
PULL
I'm pinching your cheeks.
PULL
I know that!
SIGH
Let's go home.
Okay.

I can't just lay my hands on her.
Her old man entrusted me with her.
If I do that, I'll be giving him what he wants.
That's right.
Calm down. Calm down.
...always held my sister's hand without hesitation.
What's more, I...
...

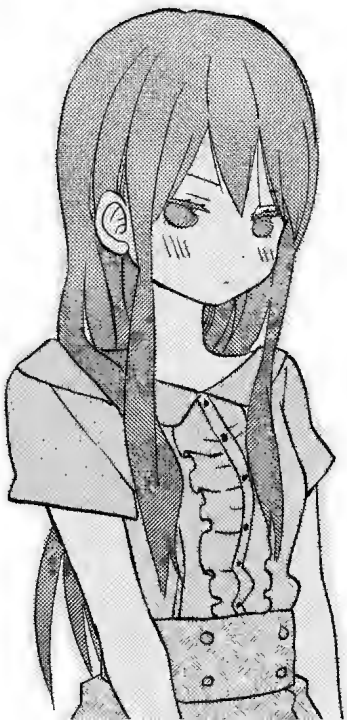
Hiro... I know you said I can stay with you, but...
I'm gonna get a part-time job.
I wonder how she feels about it.
I've been doing the same thing with Mao...
It's like I'm suddenly conscious of it.
I don't know when would be a good time to let go.


The way it is now, I'm completely indebted to you.
Everything I use is yours.

I want to contribute, too.

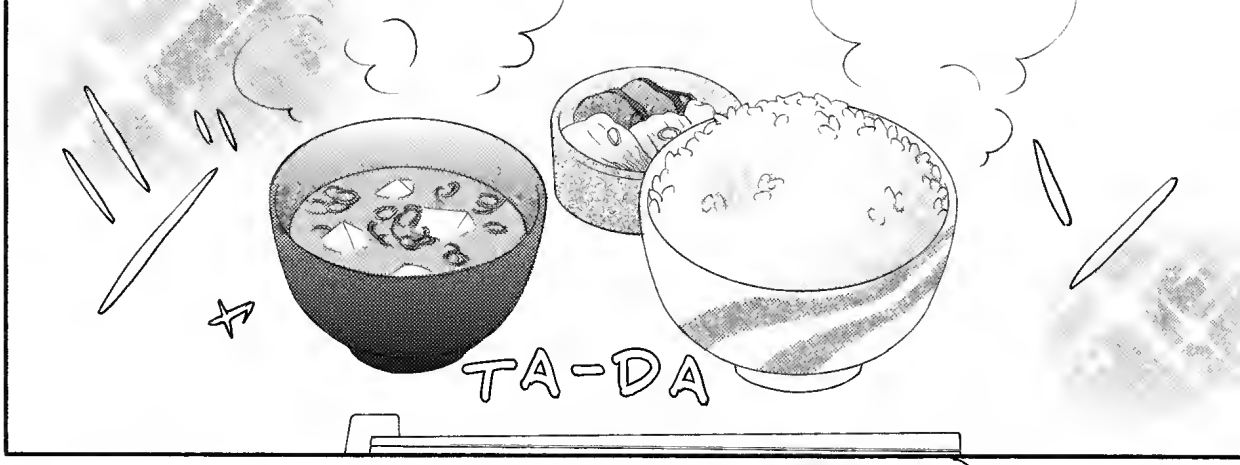


That's right, no one was ever there to teach her how...



All right! I'll teach you how to do household chores.
Mao is pretty clumsy.
She probably couldn't get much done on her own.
Mom?
Are you my mom?
Hiro, you act like a mom.
Like, holding my hand, too.
Sorry. Does it bother you?
Of course it does! It's gross!
What? But you're not letting go!

It's fine.
I'll hold your hand.
SQUEEZE
Okay.
You really did improve a lot.
I... did it!
VWIP
VWIP
VWIP
It really was because no one ever taught her.


TA-DA

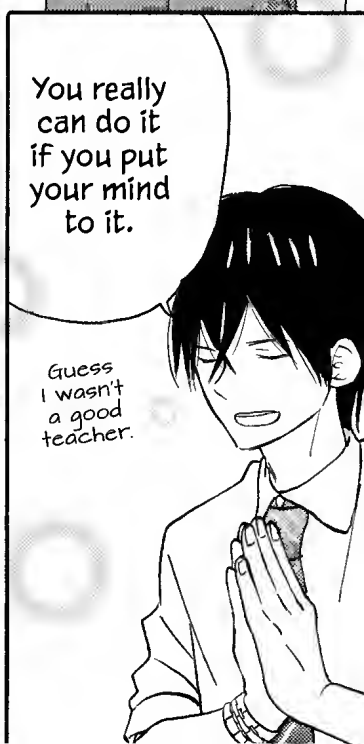
Yeah.
Chi-chan taught me.

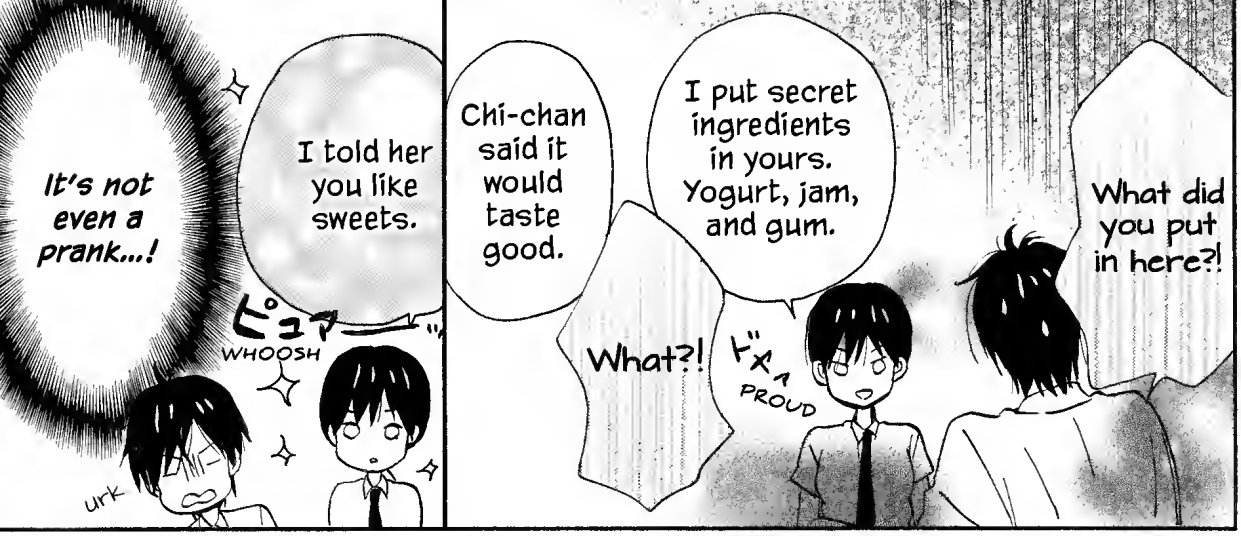
Did...you make this, Mao?

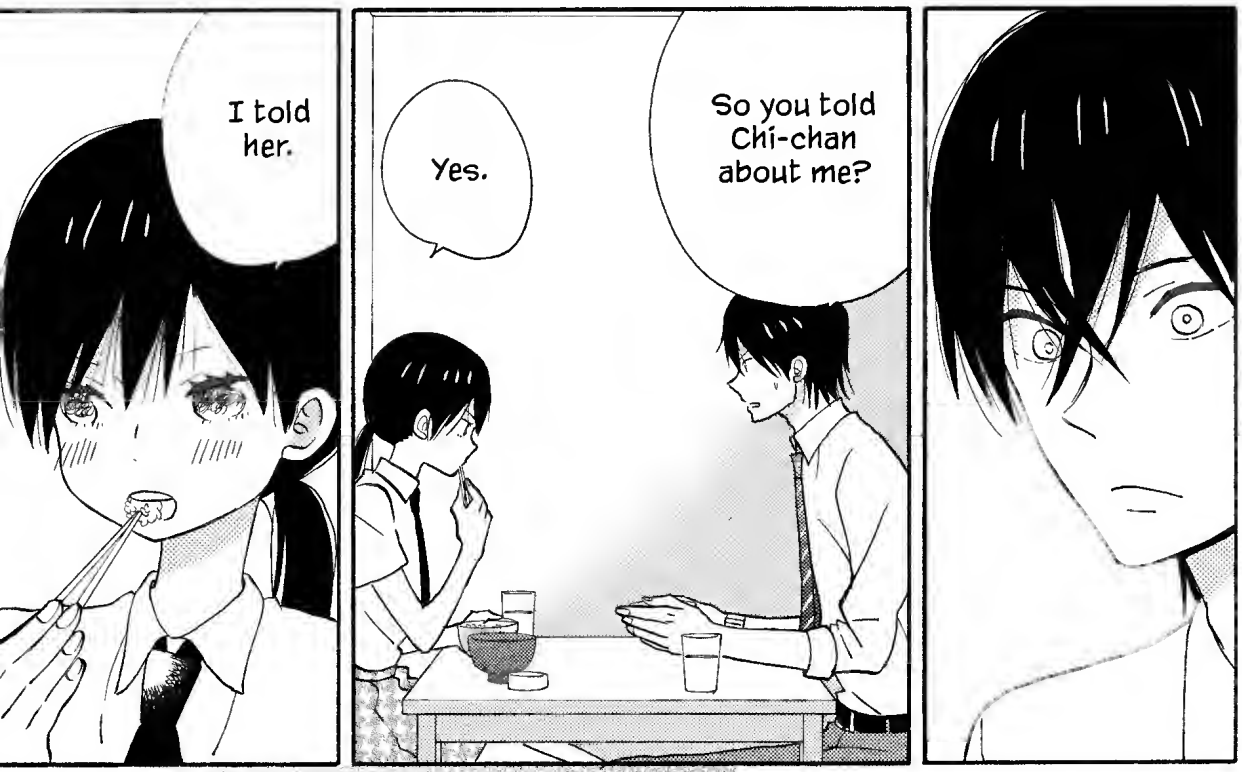
Huh?

Aaaaaargh!

SIP
SIP
I'm impressed that you made miso soup.

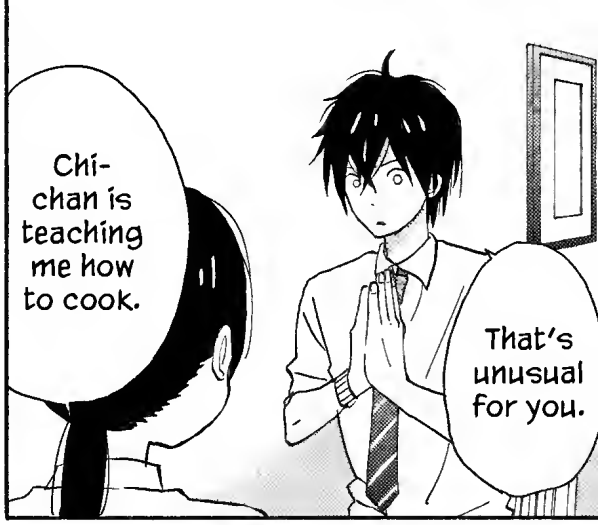

You really can do it if you put your mind to it.
Guess I wasn't a good teacher.


It's not even a prank...!
I told her you like sweets.
ピュー
WHOOSH
urk
Chi-chan said it would taste good.
I put secret ingredients in yours. Yogurt, jam, and gum.
What?!
ドヤ
PROUD
What did you put in here?!

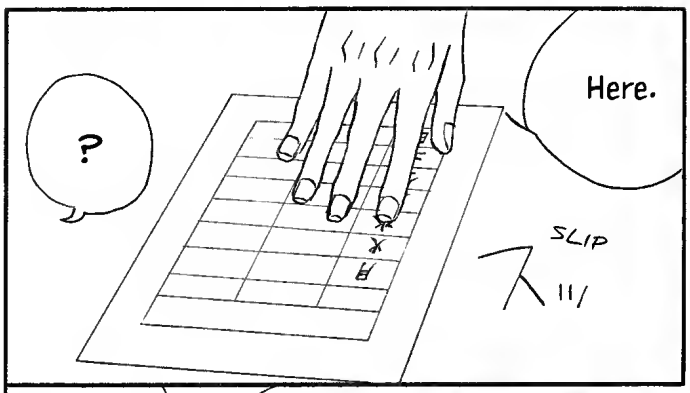

I told her.
Yes.
So you told Chi-chan about me?

Oh...
I'll be eating dinner at Chi-chan's house tonight.
I hope she doesn't get the wrong idea about Mao.
How much did she tell her?
sweet.
SIP

What?!
I want to practice on you before Daiki and Hina-chan return.
It's not practice if I'm eating it for real!


Chi-chan is teaching me how to cook.
That's unusual for you.

I want to be able to share the workload with you soon.


Here.
?
SLIP

...

I don't not want to!
Sounds like you don't.

I...

What is this?
A list of household chores.
You want to do them, right?

It feels like I just got married to an untrained wife.
Yes.
My days are Tuesday and Wednesday?
I'll do my best...on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
は、
BOOM
No, that's not what I meant...
...but a high-school wife is totally gross! Don't have weird fantasies!
I would apologize for my incompetence, but...
Sorry!

Nakamura! Are you free today?
Yeah, sure.
My sister isn't home tonight.
パタ。
SLAM
Let's go out for a drink.
Oh, okay.
Huh?
Let's go with Sugimoto-san!
Like we promised before, right?
Oh, that's right.
Is that why you styled your hair differently?
Heh heh heh.
Sugimoto-san!

Um... Please... let's have a good time.
Drinks with Sugimoto-san... And she might even be "Solami-san."
Maybe I'll ask her while we're drinking.
U-um...
Where should we go?
What do you feel like eating, Sugimoto-san?
Hello?
I like everything.
Do you like alcohol?
What?!
I love it!
Sake, huh?
I love Japanese sake.
Want to eat fish, then?

Huh?

My mom said she just left my dad.
She's at my house now and wants me to go home.

Are you serious?
I'm serious.
urk, urk, urk.

Have fun, you two!

I have to go home.
Don't worry about me, and go on, just the two of you.
Let's all go drinking again another day, okay?
Okay.
SOB

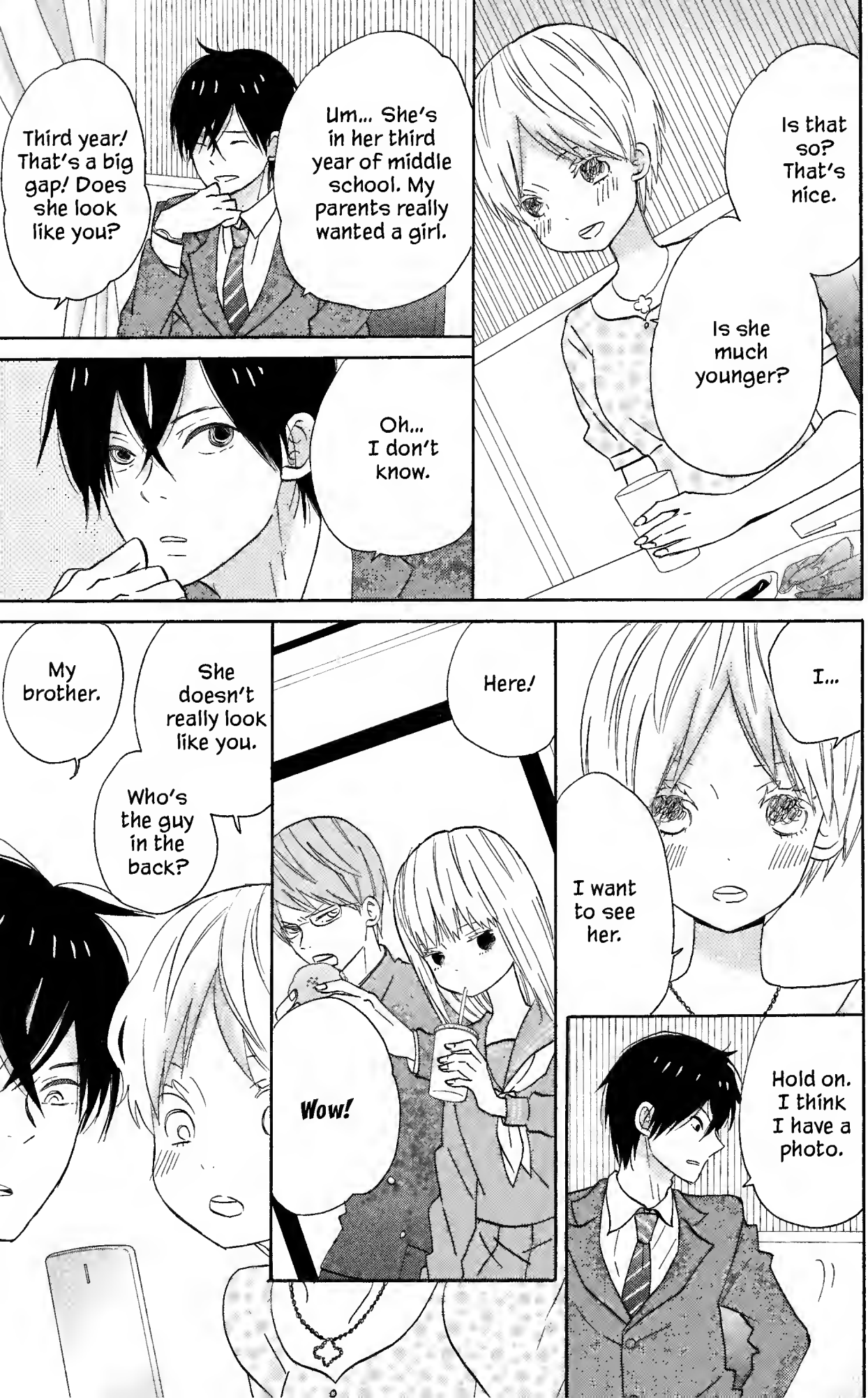
...
...

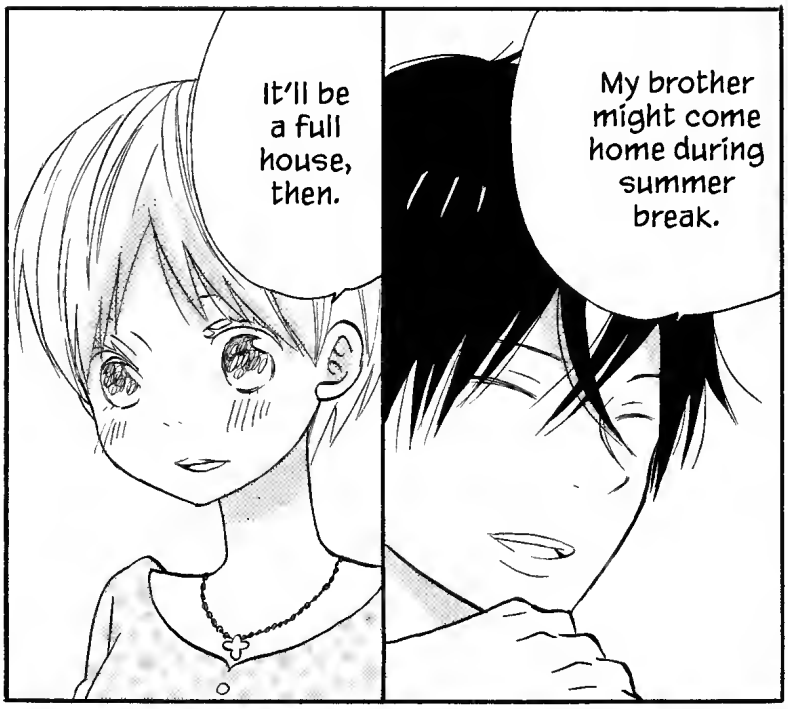
It isn't awkward!
It's kind of awkward with just me, huh?
It's... not...?
All right, then, let's go.
STAAARE
STAAARE
...

You want to go in here?
Yes, but are you sure?!
Sure.
What do you want to drink, Sugimoto-san?
And order anything you want to eat.
FIDGET
FIDGET
FIDGET
There are some strange items on the menu.
You must really like beef tongue.
...
I'll have some houyou sake...
Cold.
Fried beef tongue, seared beef tongue, and stewed beef tongue.
What is she saying?
I don't necessarily like beef tongue!

I'm...out with...
What should I do...? I'm so nervous.
Kuukai-san... I'll do my best.
ドキ BA-DUMP
ドキ BA-DUMP
Go ahead. Go ahead.
Oh... Um... Do you mind if I use my phone?
ドキ BA-DUMP
ドキ BA-DUMP
Oh, it's a warlord.
Excuse me, here you go!
Yes, just co-workers!
Unfor-tunately... we're just coworkers.
...
My bad!
You two sure make a lovely couple.
Are you on a date?

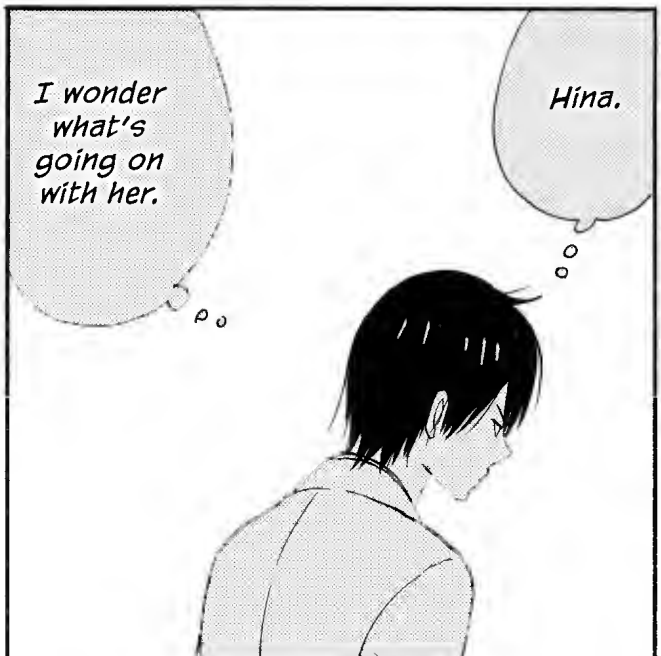
In all honesty, if a woman my age were to hear that I was dating a high-school girl, what would she do?
This is normal.
I was surprised when he said "date."
That's right.
I would be enraged if Hina showed up on the arm of a guy my age.
Even if I'm okay with it, what would they think?
Yeah, she's at a friend's house.
By the way, is your sister okay with you going out?
I must be drunk.
I think Mao would like this place.
Why am I thinking about dating at all?
Who?


Third year! That's a big gap! Does she look like you?
Um... She's in her third year of middle school. My parents really wanted a girl.
Is that so? That's nice.
Is she much younger?
Oh... I don't know.
My brother.
She doesn't really look like you.
Who's the guy in the back?
Here!
Wow!
I...
I want to see her.
Hold on. I think I have a photo.


It'll be a full house, then.
My brother might come home during summer break.

What is he eating?
AH!

BOOM
MOS Burger?


I wonder what's going on with her.
Hina.

Yeah.

...

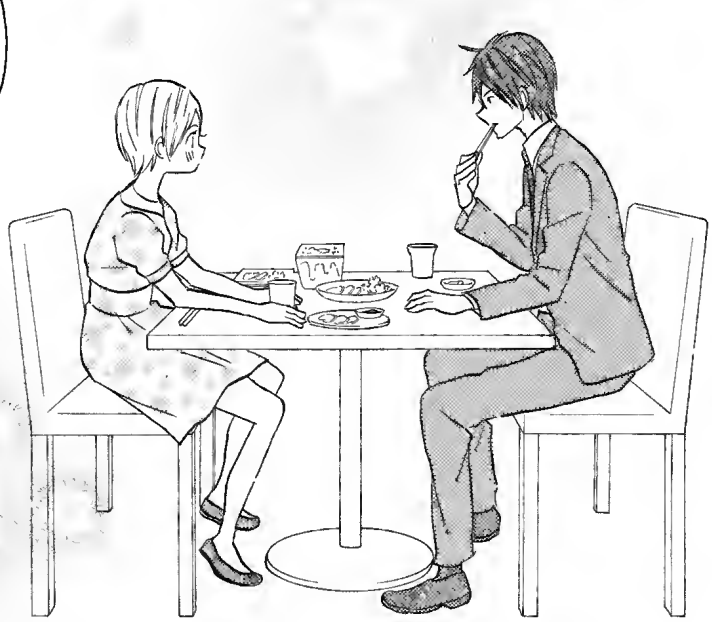
...

Oh... Um...
Are you still writing that novel?
Whaaat?!
Wha... Whaaat?!
I heard a rumor...
A rumor?!
Please don't ask me too much about it...
It's embarrassing.
There's no need to be embarrassed...
But... But...! It's really not a big deal!
Not a big deal? I think that's up to the readers to decide.

...

It must cheer some people up when they read it.

Yeah...



INCOMING MAIL 1/2500

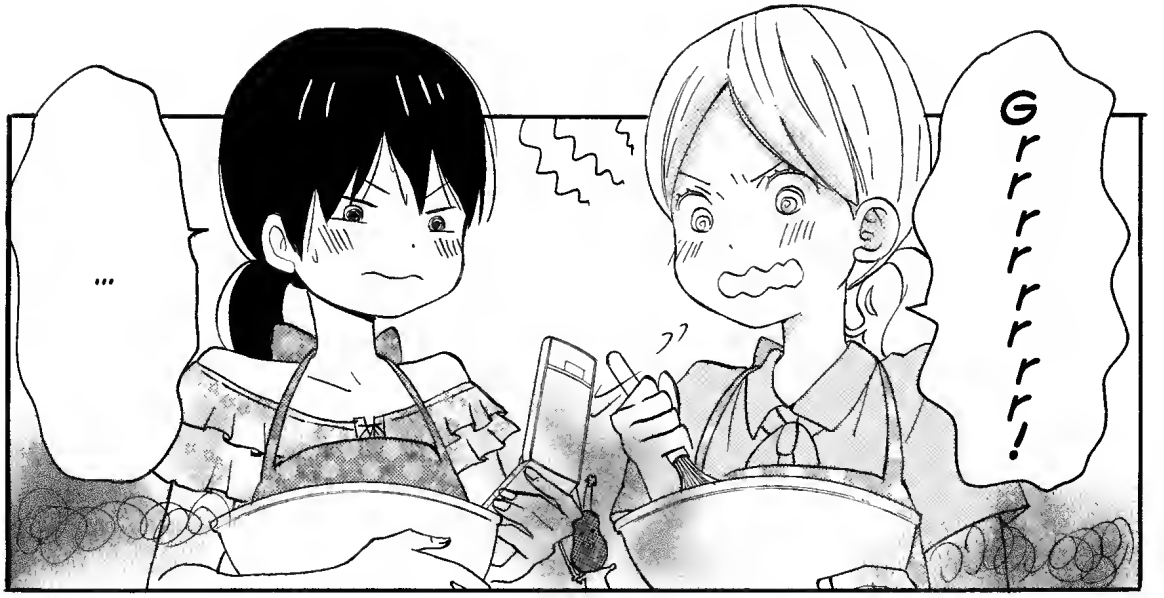
From RADICAL-SAN

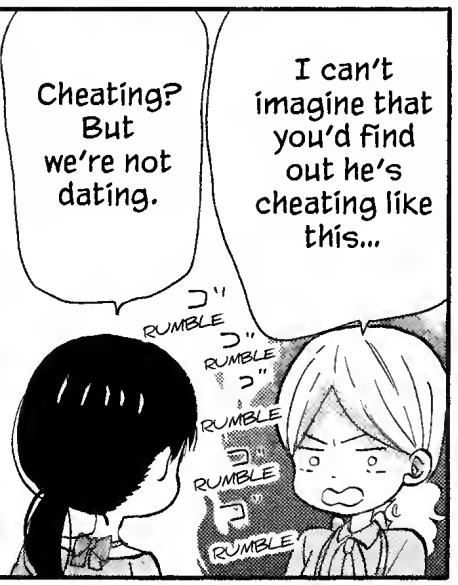
Subject

I'm having dinner with my crush.♡

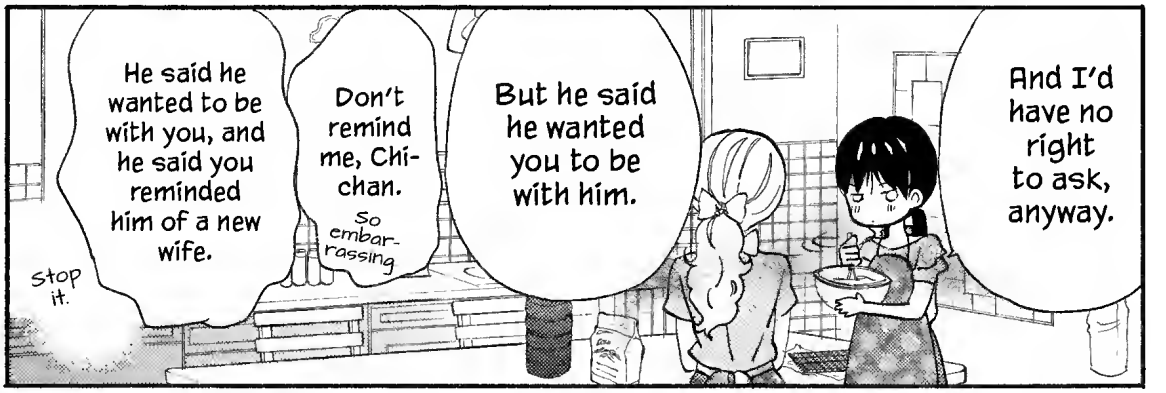
We're at a civil-war-era-themed restaurant.

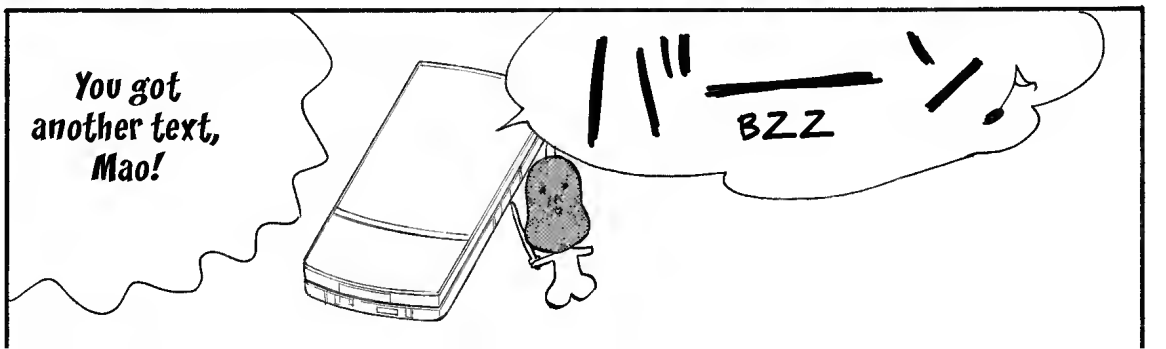
\(^o^)/


...
Grrrrrrr!


I can't imagine that you'd find out he's cheating like this...
Cheating? But we're not dating.
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

SHAKE SHAKE SHAKE
ふるふるふる
Did Hiro tell you he was going out to eat with a coworker?
GOLD


He said he wanted to be with you, and he said you reminded him of a new wife.
Stop it.
Don't remind me, Chi-chan.
So embarrassing
But he said he wanted you to be with him.
And I'd have no right to ask, anyway.

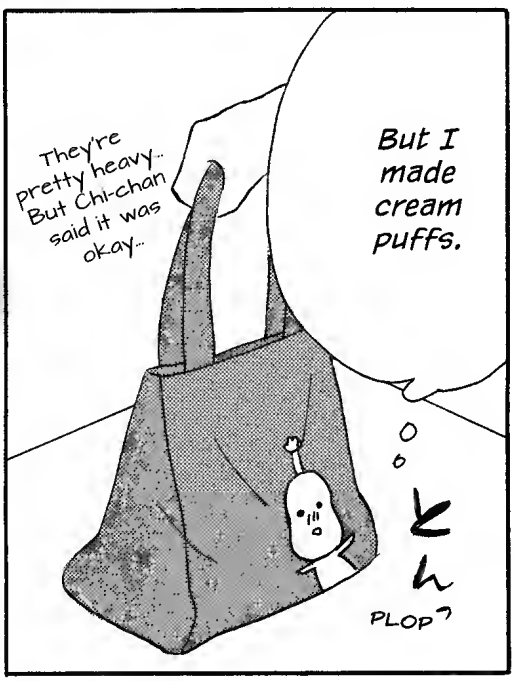

You got another text, Mao!
バーン♪
BZZ

Hiro doesn't text much.
That's not the issue!
Why did Hiro-san say that to her?
Ugh... Ugh... They exchanged phone numbers.
INCOMING MAIL
1/2500
From
RADICAL-SAN
Subject
We exchanged phone numbers. ><
He said we'll go out again, with all three of us next time (with his friend from work)...
How should I take that?
I'll text you again! Thanks for listening. ><
Enough!
I want to see her.
She's my friend, after all.
Yeah.
とぽっ
SPLOSH
Will you go ask her about it?
High alert?
That's right!
And, also...
You need to be on high alert, Mao!
I mean, you do have your age going against you.
GOLD

Yeah...
I know.
I know it's hard, but I don't think you should keep quiet about Hiro with Radical-san much longer.
I'm home!

...
WOOF わんっ
WOOF わんっ
Croquette, I'm home!
Is Hiro here?
CREAK
I guess he's not back yet.

...


But I made cream puffs.
They're pretty heavy.. But Chi-chan said it was okay..
PLOP

I've been on edge since Radical-san sent me those texts.
Are they still drinking?
Or have they gone even further? Maybe...
Maybe Hiro is the type to embrace someone right away. He must be!

Croquette, should I text Hiro?
WOOF

SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE

...

Where are you?
What time will you be back?

He's even come home in the morning.

He's come home from work later than this.

I'm not family, either.

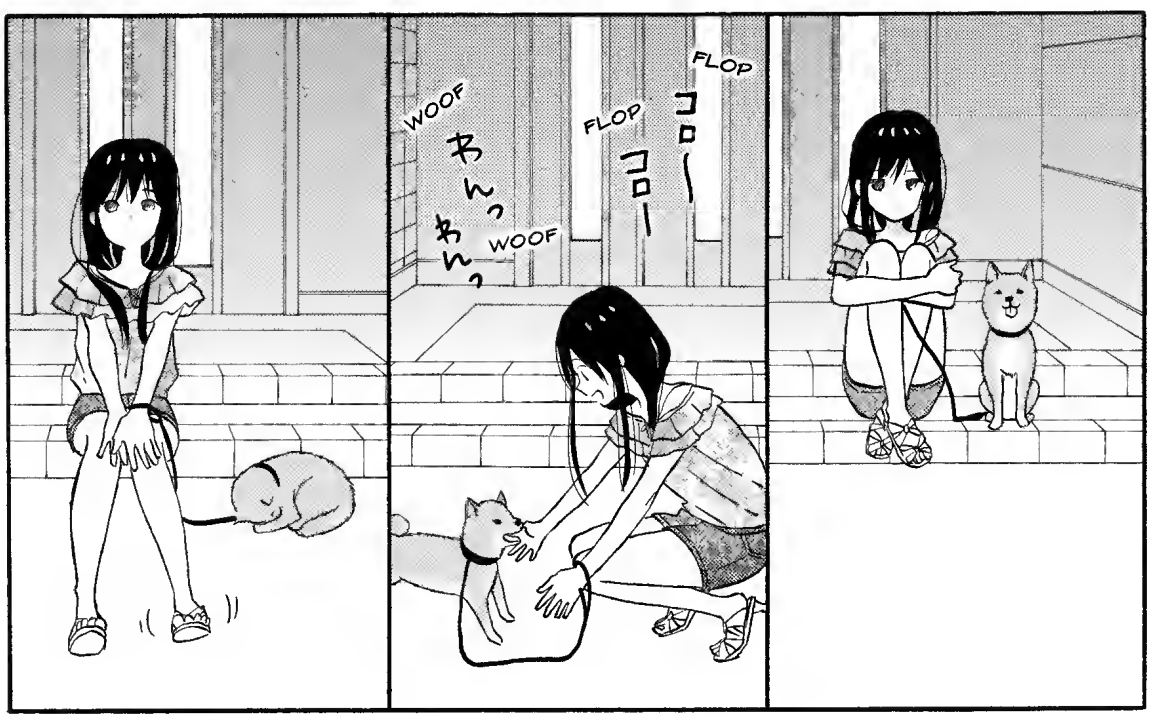
I'm not his girlfriend, after all.

...he'll think it's strange.

If I text him today to ask him...

SQUEEZE
Cro-quette...
I know! Let's go greet him.
わん
WOOF
Hurry.
Come home quickly,
Hiro.

Say "I'm home"...
...and show me your face.

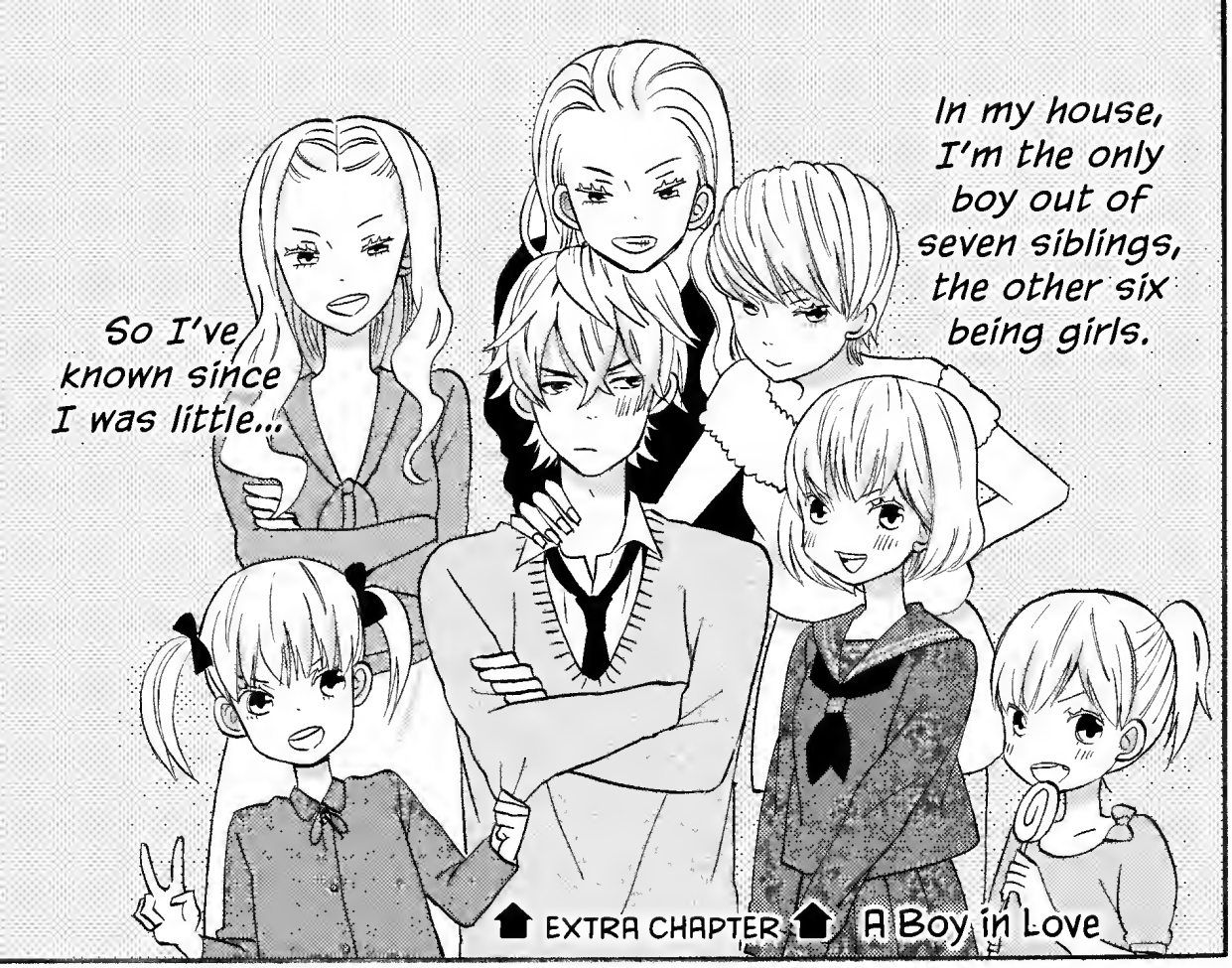

WOOF
わんっ
わんっ
WOOF
FLOP
コロー
FLOP
コロー

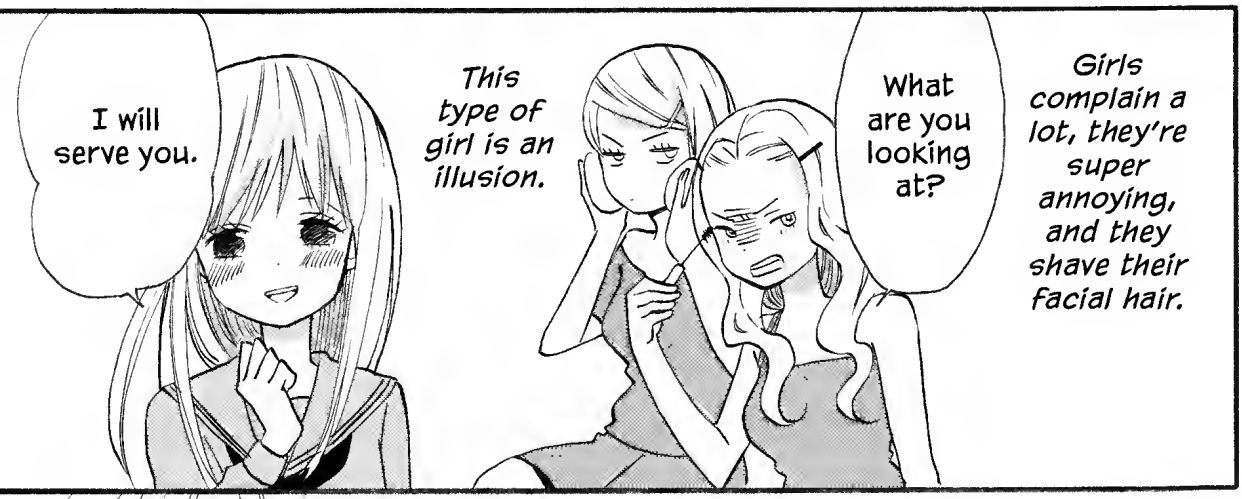
Like, ask how it went?
...ask Radical-san?
He's so late.
If only...
Maybe I can...
...he would just hurry back!
Mao.

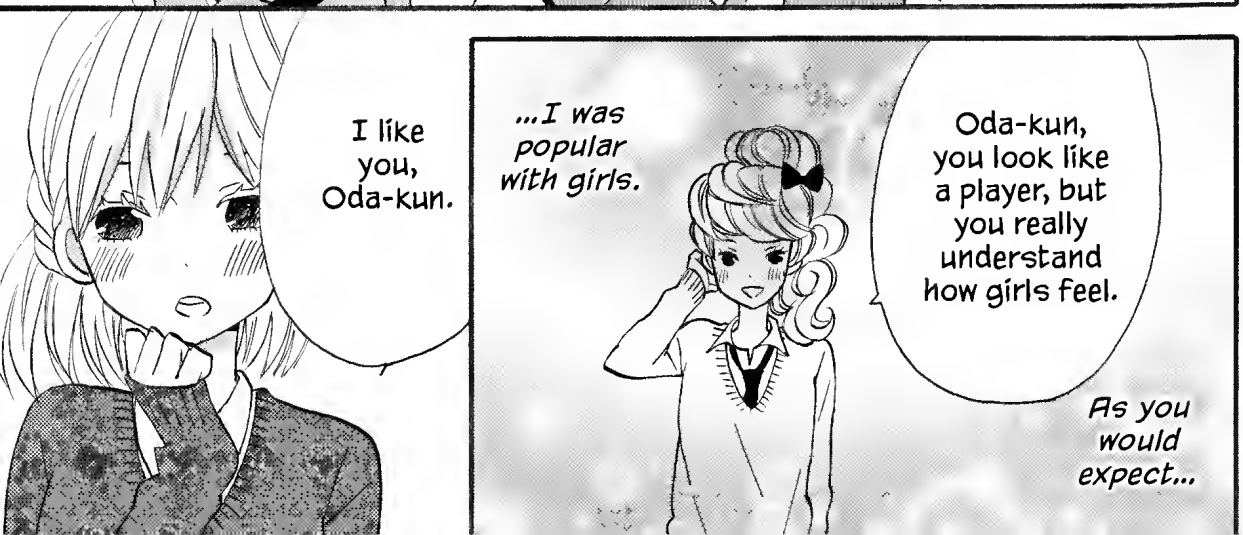
Daiki?!
Welcome home.
What are you doing out here so late?
I'm waiting for Hiro...
What are you doing here, Daiki?

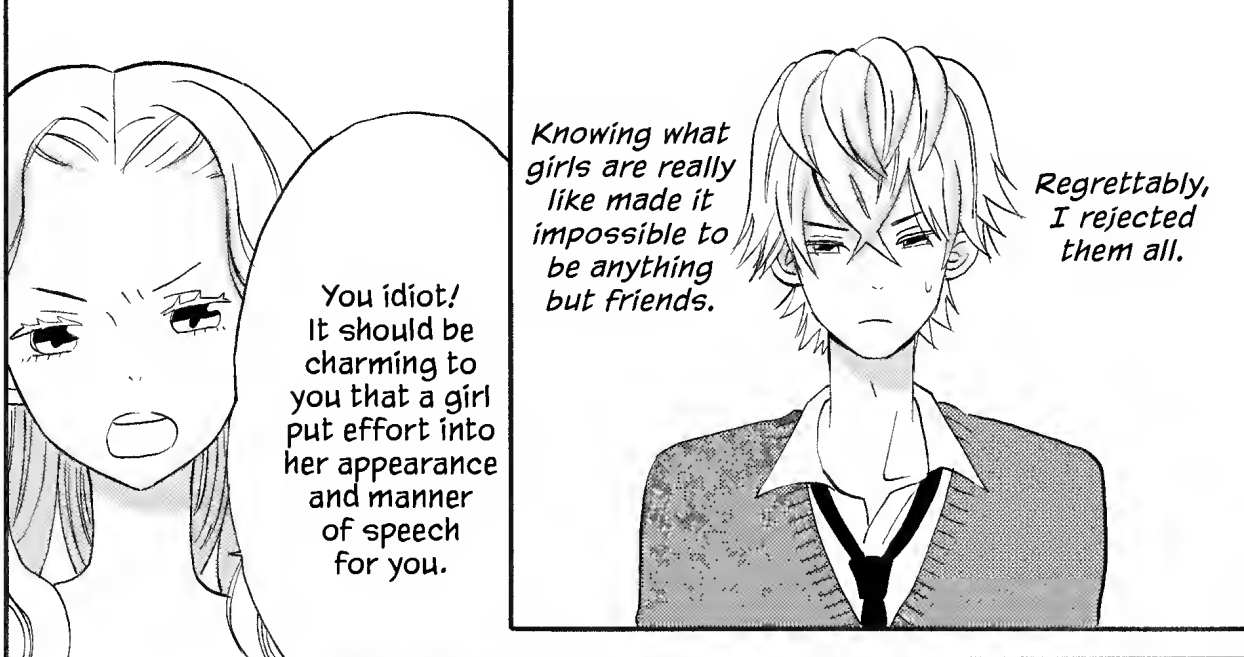
I had no idea.
It's summer vacation already.
What do you mean? I'm moving back.
...
Mao, do you have a crush on my brother?
It's a bit sooner than I had planned. I haven't told Hiro yet.

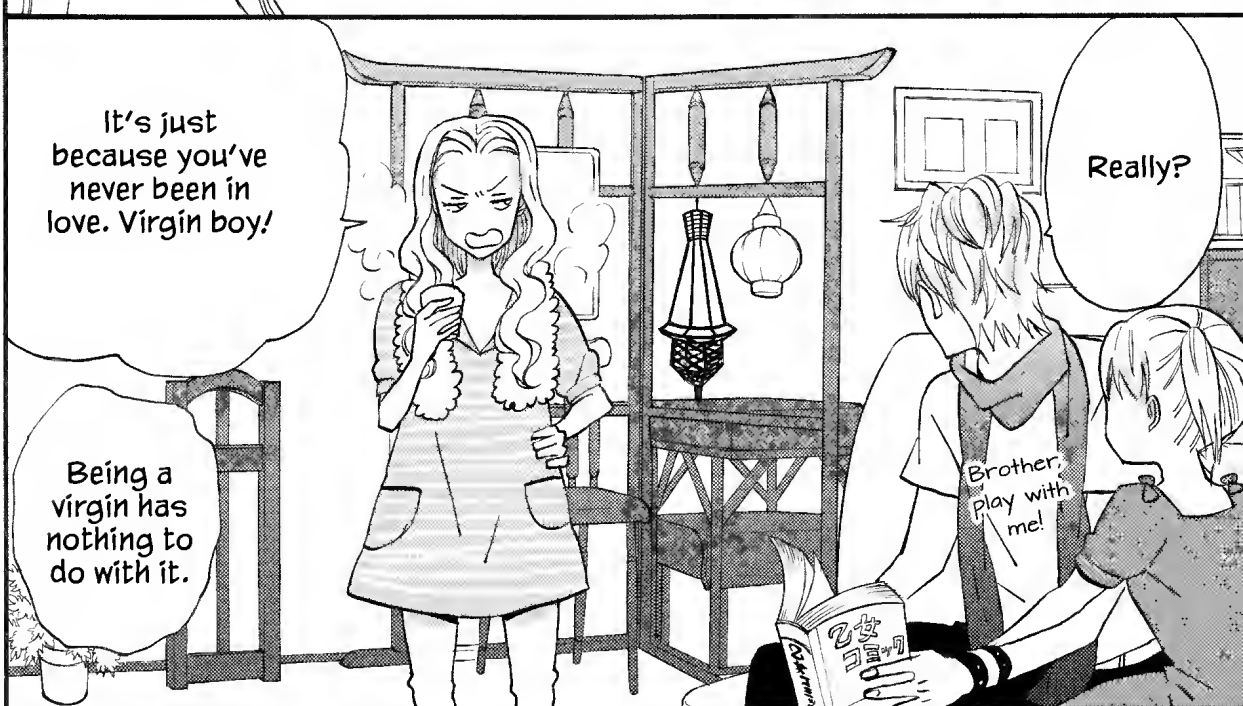
I knew it.
I'm against it.
To be continued...


In my house, I'm the only boy out of seven siblings, the other six being girls.
So I've known since I was little...
EXTRA CHAPTER A Boy in Love


Girls complain a lot, they're super annoying, and they shave their facial hair.
What are you looking at?
This type of girl is an illusion.
I will serve you.


Oda-kun, you look like a player, but you really understand how girls feel.
As you would expect...
...I was popular with girls.
I like you, Oda-kun.


You idiot! It should be charming to you that a girl put effort into her appearance and manner of speech for you.
Knowing what girls are really like made it impossible to be anything but friends.
Regrettably, I rejected them all.


It's just because you've never been in love. Virgin boy!
Being a virgin has nothing to do with it.
Really?
Brother, play with me!
乙女コミック

*Girl's Comic

You've been reading too many comics.
Don't worry! Love will take you by surprise!
Is that so?
Besides, when you love someone, even their bad points are charming.
Girls Comic
乙女コミック

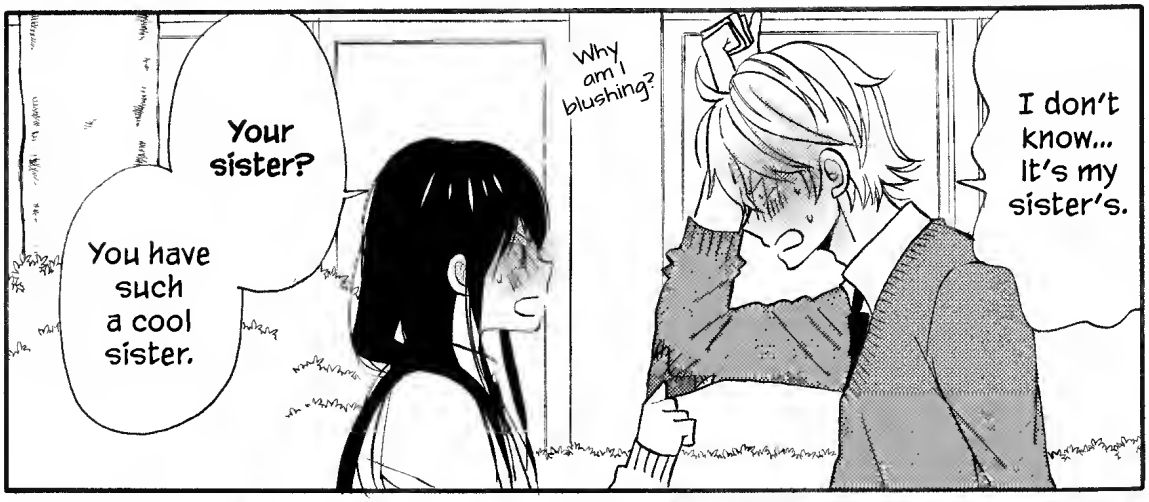
Good morning.
Good morning, Oda-kun.
Good morning.
Oh, sorry.
BAM
Hi.
She's so weird.
Totally.
What's with her? Is she angry?
...

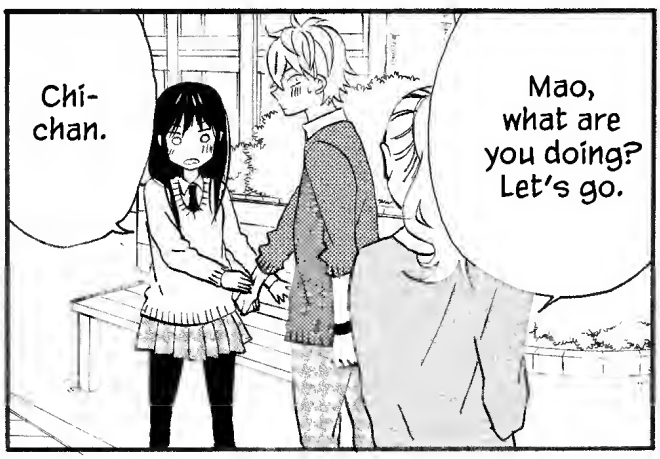
Motomiya-san is always in a bad mood. Don't worry about it.
Oda-kun, you're so nice!
But I was in the wrong just now.
Wait! What's that? Is that a patch on your elbow?
Who knows?
Always?
Something must be bothering her.
HA HA HA!
No way!
Hee!
Heh heh heh heh!
GRRRRR!
My sister! My sister definitely did this!
Huh?
BOOM

I hate you, Sis...!
They laughed at me!
I bet they're still snickering about it in a corner somewhere.
It's Moto-miya.
...
Hey.
Sorry for earlier.
Earlier?
What about?
I hit you.
Accidentally
I didn't notice.

BAM
What the heck?
...
She is weird!
Oh, no! The patch!
She'll laugh at me!
And then snicker about it, too.
Where did you buy that?

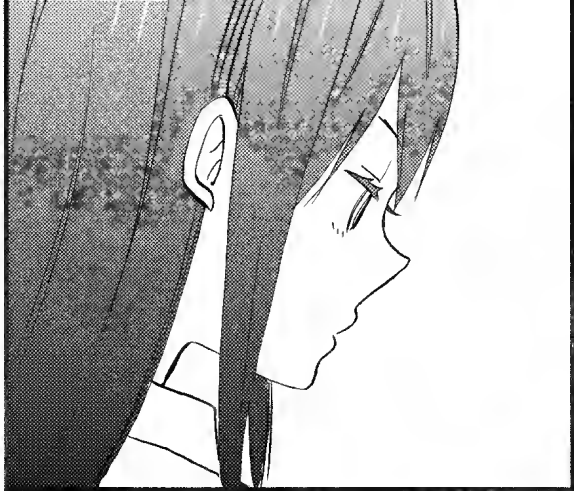
Huh?


I don't know... It's my sister's.
Why am I blushing?
Your sister?
You have such a cool sister.


Mao, what are you doing? Let's go.
Chi-chan.

What is this? What is this?
Just because a girl touched me?
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP

Okay.
...



They're super annoying.

She's always in a bad mood.

Girls complain a lot.

But...

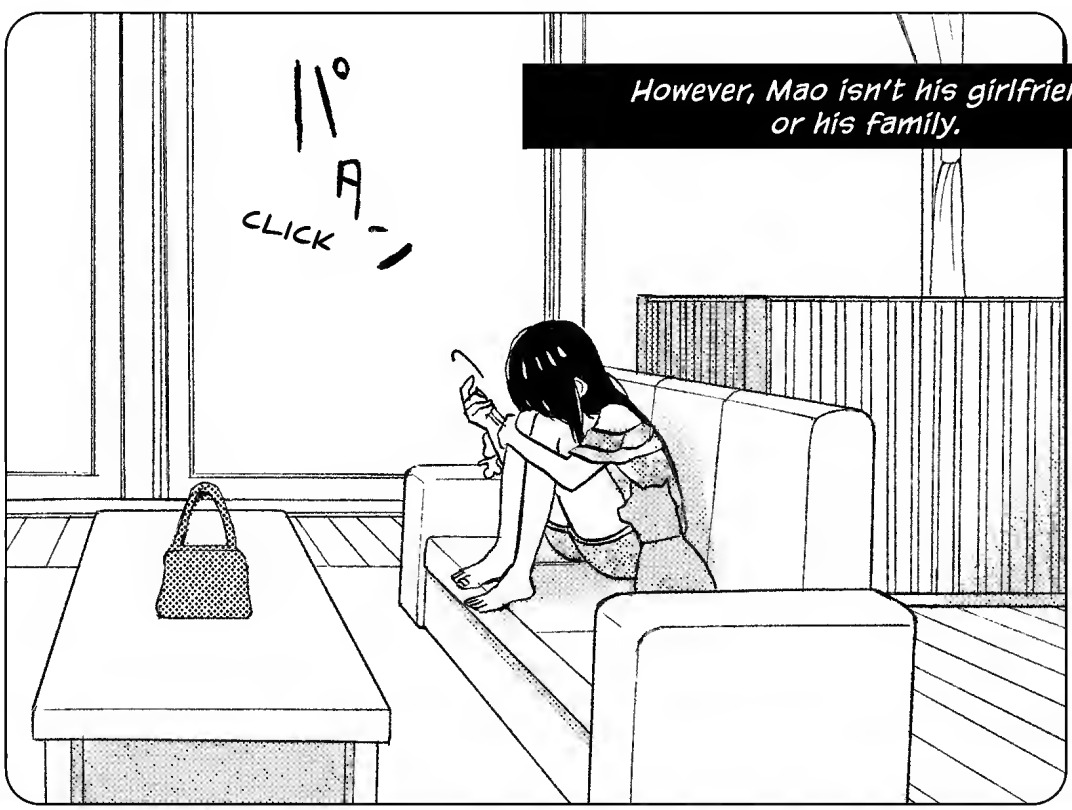
"Love will take you by surprise!"

But...

End of extra chapter

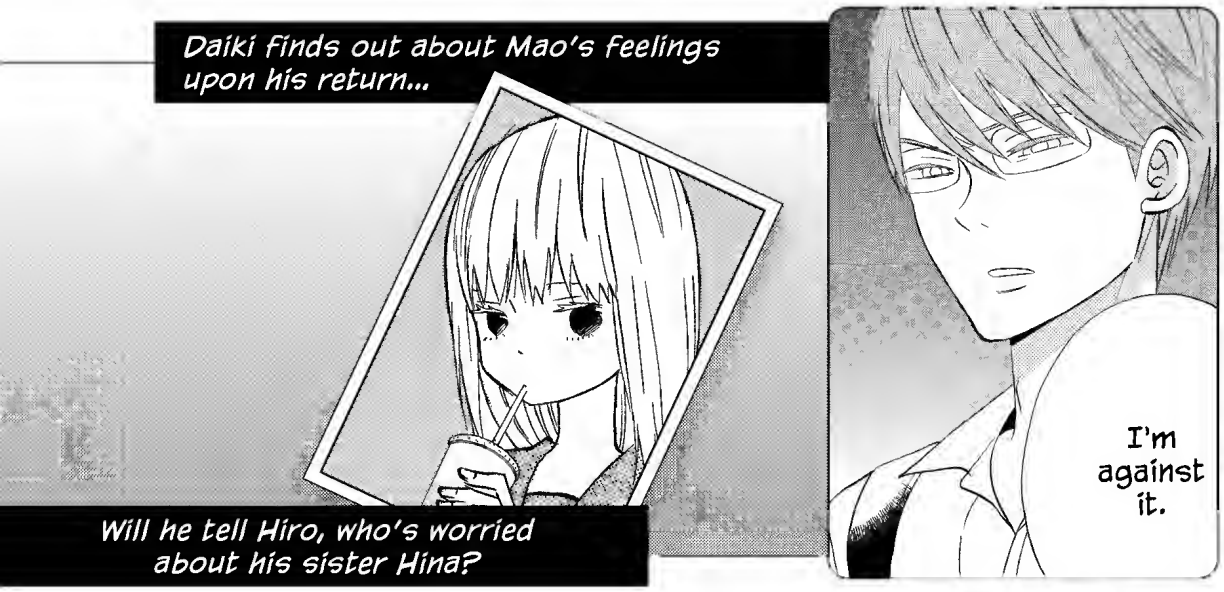
Does Hiro feel the same way...?

Mao can't stop thinking about the words Hiro unexpectedly uttered.



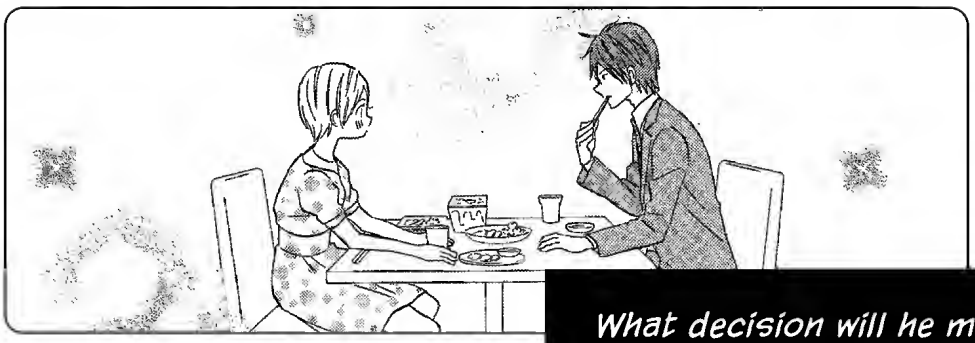
The more she likes him, the more painful it is.

Daiki finds out about Mao's feelings upon his return...



Will he tell Hiro, who's worried about his sister Hina?

Mao wishes more than anything for Hiro to find happiness.

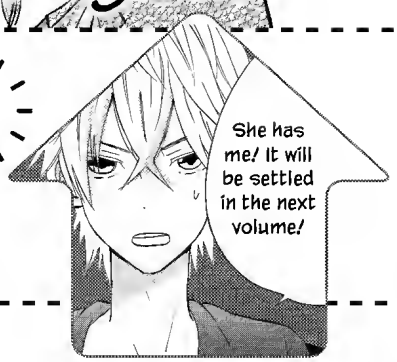


What decision will he make?!

Will Mao end up alone again?

HOUSE of the SUN 4

Popular right now!



House of the Sun 3

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